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WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

VOL. XI.

LONDON:
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Drawn by M. W. Turner from a sketch by [illegible]

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THE [illegible] OF SIGHS

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WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

VOL. XI.

The Bernese Alps.

LONDON.
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1832.

THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON:

WITH

HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,

AND HIS LIFE,

BY THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL. XI.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1832.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

In the contents of this Volume, together with the fourth Canto of "Childe Harold," the reader may trace the poetical, as well as personal, history of Lord Byron, from October, 1816, when he left Switzerland, down to the beginning of 1820, by which time he had taken up his residence at Ravenna.

It includes some example of almost every kind of poetical composition in which he ever excelled: among others, the first, and perhaps greatest, of his dramatic efforts, and the earliest specimen of his comic narrative.

London, October 10. 1832.

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MANFRED,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

[The following extracts from Lord Byron's letters to Mr. Murray, are all we have to offer respecting the history of the composition of Manfred: —

Venice, Feb. 15. 1817. —"I forgot to mention to you, that a kind of Poem in dialogue (in blank verse) or Drama, from which 'the Incantation' is an extract, begun last summer in Switzerland, is finished: it is in three acts, but of a very wild, metaphysical, and inexplicable kind. Almost all the persons — but two or three — are Spirits of the earth and air, or the waters; the scene is in the Alps; the hero a kind of magician, who is tormented by a species of remorse, the cause of which is left half unexplained. He wanders about invoking these Spirits, which appear to him, and are of no use; he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil Principle, *in propriâ personâ*, to evocate a ghost, which appears, and gives him an ambiguous and disagreeable answer; and, in the third act, he is found by his attendants dying in a tower where he had studied his art. You may perceive, by this outline, that I have no great opinion of this piece of fantasy; but I have at least rendered it *quite impossible* for the stage, for which my intercourse with Drury Lane has given me the greatest contempt. I have not even copied it off, and feel too lazy at present to attempt the whole; but when I have, I will send it you, and you may either throw it into the fire or not."

March 3. — "I sent you the other day, in two covers, the first act of 'Manfred,' a drama as mad as Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in twenty-five acts and some odd scenes: mine is but in three acts."

March 9. — "In remitting the third act of the sort of dramatic poem of which you will by this time have received the two first, I have little to observe, except that you must not publish it (if it ever is published) without giving me previous notice. I have really and truly no notion whether it is good or bad; and as this was not the case with the principal of my former publications, I am, therefore, inclined to rank it very humbly. You will submit it to Mr. Gifford, and to whomsoever you please besides. The thing, you will see at a glimpse, could never be attempted or thought of for the stage; I much doubt if for publication even. It is too much in my old style; but I composed it actually with a *horror* of the stage, and with a view to render the thought of it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representation. I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must leave off; but what could I do? Without exertion of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagination and reality."

March 25. — "With regard to the 'Witch Drama,' I repeat, that I have not an idea if it is good or bad. If bad, it must, on no account, be risked in publication; if good, it is at your service. I value it at three hundred guineas, or less, if you like it. Perhaps, if published, the best way will be to add it to your winter volume, and not publish separately. The price will show you I don't pique myself upon it; so speak out. You may put it into the fire, if you like, and Gifford don't like."

April 9. — " As for ' Manfred,' the two first acts are the best; the third so so; but I was blown with the first and second heats. You may call it ' a Poem,' for it is no Drama, and I do not choose to have it called by so d—d a name, — ' a Poem in dialogue,' or — Pantomime, if you will; any thing but a green-room synonyme; and this is your motto —

' There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.' "

The Third Act was re-written before publication; as to the particulars of which, the reader is referred to a subsequent note. To avoid overloading the margin, we may give here the most important paragraphs of the two ablest critiques that immediately followed the appearance of Manfred: —

" In Manfred, we recognise at once the gloom and potency of that soul which burned and blasted and fed upon itself, in Harold, and Conrad, and Lara — and which comes again in this piece, more in sorrow than in anger — more proud, perhaps, and more awful than ever — but with the fiercer traits of its misanthropy subdued, as it were, and quenched in the gloom of a deeper despondency. Manfred does not, like Conrad and Lara, wreak the anguish of his burning heart in the dangers and daring of desperate and predatory war — nor seek to drown bitter thoughts in the tumult of perpetual contention; nor yet, like Harold, does he sweep over the peopled scenes of the earth with high disdain and aversion, and make his survey of the business, and pleasures, and studies of man an occasion for taunts and sarcasms, and the food of an unmeasurable spleen. He is fixed by the genius of the poet in the majestic solitudes of the central Alps — where, from his youth up, he has lived in proud but calm seclusion from the ways of men, conversing only with the magnificent forms and aspects of nature by which he is surrounded, and with the Spirits of the Elements over whom he has acquired dominion, by the secret and unhallowed studies of sorcery and magic. He is averse, indeed, from mankind, and scorns the low and frivolous nature to which he belongs; but he cherishes no animosity or hostility to that feeble race. Their concerns excite no interest — their pursuits no sympathy — their joys no envy. It is irksome and vexatious for him to be crossed by them in his melancholy musings, — but he treats them with gentleness and pity; and, except when stung to impatience by too importunate an intrusion, is kind and considerate to the comforts of all around him. — This piece is properly entitled a dramatic poem — for it is merely poetical, and is not at all a drama or play in the modern acceptation of the term. It has no action, no plot, and no characters; Manfred merely muses and suffers from the beginning to the end. His distresses are the same at the opening of the scene and at its closing, and the temper in which they are borne is the same. A hunter and a priest, and some domestics, are indeed introduced, but they have no connection with the passions or sufferings on which the interest depends; and Manfred is substantially alone throughout the whole piece. He holds no communion but with the memory of the Being he had loved; and the Immortal Spirits whom he evokes to reproach with his misery, and their inability to relieve it. These unearthly beings approach nearer to the cha-

racter of persons of the drama — but still they are but choral accompaniments to the performance; and Manfred is, in reality, the only actor and sufferer on the scene. To delineate his character indeed — to render conceivable his feelings — is plainly the whole scope and design of the poem; and the conception and execution are, in this respect, equally admirable. It is a grand and terrific vision of a being invested with superhuman attributes, in order that he may be capable of more than human sufferings, and be sustained under them by more than human force and pride. To object to the improbability of the fiction, is to mistake the end and aim of the author. Probabilities, we apprehend, did not enter at all into his consideration; his object was, to produce effect — to exalt and dilate the character through whom he was to interest or appal us — and to raise our conception of it, by all the helps that could be derived from the majesty of nature, or the dread of superstition. It is enough, therefore, if the situation in which he has placed him is *conceivable*, and if the supposition of its reality enhances our emotions and kindles our imagination; — for it is Manfred only that we are required to fear, to pity, or admire. If we can once conceive of him as a real existence, and enter into the depth and the height of his pride and his sorrows, we may deal as we please with the means that have been used to furnish us with this impression, or to enable us to attain to this conception. We may regard them but as types, or metaphors, or allegories; but HE is the thing to be expressed, and the feeling and the intellect of which all these are but shadows." — JEFFREY.

"In this very extraordinary poem, Lord Byron has pursued the same course as in the third canto of Childe Harold, and put out his strength upon the same objects. The action is laid among the mountains of the Alps — the characters are all, more or less, formed and swayed by the operations of the magnificent scenery around them, and every page of the poem teems with imagery and passion, though, at the same time, the mind of the poet is often overborne, as it were, by the strength and novelty of its own conceptions; and thus the composition, as a whole, is liable to many and fatal objections. But there is a still more novel exhibition of Lord Byron's powers in this remarkable drama. He has here burst into the world of spirits; and, in the wild delight with which the elements of nature seem to have inspired him, he has endeavoured to embody and call up before him their ministering agents, and to employ these wild personifications, as he formerly employed the feelings and passions of man. We are not prepared to say, that, in this daring attempt, he has completely succeeded. We are inclined to think, that the plan he has conceived, and the principal character which he has wished to delineate, would require a fuller developement than is here given to them; and, accordingly, a sense of imperfection, incompleteness, and confusion accompanies the mind throughout the perusal of the poem, owing either to some failure on the part of the poet, or to the inherent mystery of the subject. But though, on that account, it is difficult to comprehend distinctly the drift of the composition, it unquestionably exhibits many noble delineations of mountain scenery, — many impressive and terrible pictures of passion, — and many wild and awful visions of imaginary horror." — PROFESSOR WILSON.]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANFRED.
CHAMOIS HUNTER.
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.
MANUEL.
HERMAN.

WITCH OF THE ALPS.
ARIMANES.
NEMESIS.
THE DESTINIES.
SPIRITS, &c.

The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps — partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.—Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—Time, Midnight.*

Man. THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise;
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not: I have done men good,

And I have met with good even among men —
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me —
But this avail'd not: — Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth. —
Now to my task. —
Mysterious Agency!
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe! (1)
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light —
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence — ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts, (2)
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things —
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you — Rise! appear!
[*A pause.*
They come not yet. — Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you — by this sign,
Which makes you tremble — by the claims of him
Who is undying, — Rise! appear! — Appear!
[*A pause.*
If it be so. — Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,

(1) [Original MS. —
"Eternal Agency!
Ye spirits of the immortal Universe!" — E.]

(2) [MS. — "Of inaccessible mountains are the haunts." — E.]

Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will.—Appear!

[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery: it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.*

First Spirit.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion; (1)
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd!

Voice of the Second Spirit.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.

(1) [MS.—"Which is fit for my pavilion."—E.]

The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay. (1)
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base —
And what with me wouldst *Thou?*

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd —
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,

(1) [MS. — "Or makes its ice delay."— E.]

As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth ;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide —
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm ;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm ;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast :
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light ?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air ;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe ;

Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

Man. Forgetfulness——

First Spirit. Of what—of whom—and why?

Man. Of that which is within me; read it there—
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine.

Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But—thou mayst die.
Man. Will death bestow it on me?
Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?
Man. Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
Answer, or I will teach you what I am.
Spirit. We answer as we answer'd; our reply
Is even in thine own words.
Man. Why say ye so?
Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.
Man. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.
Spirit. Say;
What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again—
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——
Man. Accursed! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!
Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

Man. No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part—
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

Spirit. We have no forms, beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!

Seventh Spirit. (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*) Behold!

Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,
And we again will be—— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

(*A Voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)[1]

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,

(1) [These verses were written in Switzerland, in 1816, and transmitted to England for publication, with the third canto of Childe Harold. "As they were written," says Mr. Moore, "immediately after the last fruitless

And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;(1)
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

---

attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in the poet's thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas." — E.]

(1) ["And the *wisp* on the morass." — Hearing, in February, 1818, of a menaced version of Manfred by some Italian, Lord Byron wrote to his friend Mr. Hoppner — "If you have any means of communicating with the man, would you permit me to convey to him the offer of any price he may obtain, or think to obtain, for his project, provided he will throw his translation into the fire, and promise not to undertake any other of that, or any other of my things? I will send him his money immediately, on this condition." A negotiation was accordingly set on foot, and the translator, on receiving two hundred francs, delivered up his manuscript, and engaged never to translate any other of the poet's works. Of his qualifications for the task some notion may be formed from the fact, that he had turned the word "wisp," in this line, into "a bundle of straw." — E.]

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel (1)
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.— MANFRED *alone upon the Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me—
The spells which I have studied baffle me—
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for

(1) [MS.—"I do adjure thee to this spell."—E.]

The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,
[*An eagle passes.*
Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!

How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are — what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*
The natural music of the mountain reed —
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;(1)
My soul would drink those echoes. — Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,

(1) [The germs of this, and of several other passages in Manfred, may be found in the Journal of his Swiss tour, which Lord Byron transmitted to his sister: *e. g.* "Sept. 19. — Arrived at a lake in the very bosom of the mountains; left our quadrupeds, and ascended further; came to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead's perspiration fell like rain, making the same dents as in a sieve; the chill of the wind and the snow turned me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hohhouse went to the highest pinnacle. The whole of the mountains superb. A shepherd on a steep and very high cliff playing upon his *pipe;* very different from Arcadia. The music of the cows' *bells* (for their wealth, like the patriarchs', is cattle) in the pastures, which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realised all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence — much more so than Greece or Asia Minor; for there we are a little too much of the sabre and musket order, and if there is a crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other: but this was pure and unmixed — solitary, savage, and *patriarchal.* As we went, they played the 'Ranz des Vaches' and other airs, by way of farewell. I have lately repeopled my mind with nature." — E.]

A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance—
I will approach him nearer.

Man. (*not perceiving the other.*) To be thus—
Grey-hair'd with anguish, (1) like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless, (2)
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er

(1) [See the opening lines to the "Prisoner of Chillon," *antè*, Vol. X. p. 227. Speaking of Marie Antoinette, "I was struck," says 'Madame Campan, "with the astonishing change misfortune had wrought upon her features: her whole head of hair had turned almost white, during her transit from Varennes to Paris." The same thing occurred to the unfortunate Queen Mary. "With calm but undaunted fortitude," says her historian, "she laid her neck upon the block; and while one executioner held her hands, the other, at the second stroke, cut off her head, which, falling out of its attire, discovered her hair, already grown quite grey with cares and sorrows." The hair of Mary's grandson, Charles I., turned quite grey, in like manner, during his stay at Carisbrooke.—E.]

(2) ["Passed whole woods of *withered pines*, all withered,—trunks stripped and barkless, branches lifeless; done by a *single winter*: their appearance reminded me of me and my family."—*Swiss Journal.*]

With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years
And hours — all tortured into ages — hours
Which I outlive! — Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; (1) but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell, (2)
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I am giddy. (3)

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

(1) ["Ascended the Wengen mountain; left the horses, took off my coat, and went to the summit. On one side, our view comprised the Jungfrau, with all her glaciers; then the Dent d'Argent, shining like truth; then the Little Giant, and the Great Giant; and last, not least, the Wetterhorn. The height of the Jungfrau is thirteen thousand feet above the sea, and eleven thousand above the valley. Heard the avalanches falling every five minutes nearly." — *Swiss Journal.*]

(2) [MS. — "Like foam from the roused ocean of *old* Hell." — E.]

(3) ["The clouds rose from the opposite valley, curling up perpendicular precipices, like the *foam* of the *ocean of hell* during a spring tide — it was white and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appearance. The side we ascended was not of so precipitous a nature; but, on arriving at the summit, we looked down upon the other side upon a boiling sea of cloud, dashing against the crags on which we stood — these crags on one side quite perpendicular. In passing the masses of snow, I made a snowball and pelted Hobhouse with it." — *Swiss Journal.*]

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel — thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg —
Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal! — for the love
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him.*) Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime — as thus — thus they shall be —
In this one plunge. — Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully —
Ye were not meant for me — Earth! take these atoms!

[*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*

C. Hun. Hold, madman! — though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood —
Away with me —— I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart — nay, grasp me not —
I am all feebleness — the mountains whirl [thou?
Spinning around me —— I grow blind —— What art

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon. — Away with me —— [me —
The clouds grow thicker —— there — now lean on
Place your foot here — here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub — now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle — softly — well —
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour —
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter. — Come, 'tis bravely done —
You should have been a hunter. — Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no — yet pause — thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide —
But whither?

Man. It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage —

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thawed my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

Man. Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

Man. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience——

Man. Patience and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.

C. Hun. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

Man. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.

Man. I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

Man. Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see—and then I look within—
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already!

C. Hun. And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.

C. Hun. And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?

Man. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest!

And penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.
Man. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril's past:
And once again, I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.(1)

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays (2) still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,

(1) [This scene is one of the most poetical and most sweetly written in the poem. There is a still and delicious witchery in the tranquillity and seclusion of the place, and the celestial beauty of the being who reveals herself in the midst of these visible enchantments. — JEFFREY.]

(2) This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it: this effect lasts till noon. — ["Before ascending the mountain, went to the torrent; the sun upon it, forming a *rainbow* of the lower part of all colours, but principally purple and gold; the bow moving as you move: I never saw any thing like this; it is only in the sunshine." — *Swiss Journal.*]

As told in the Apocalypse.(1) No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.(2)

(1) ["Arrived at the foot of the Jungfrau; glaciers; torrents: one of these torrents nine hundred feet in height of visible descent; heard an avalanche fall, like thunder; glaciers enormous; storm came on—thunder, lightning, hail; all in perfection, and beautiful. The torrent is in shape curving over the rock, like the tail of a white horse streaming in the wind, such as it might be conceived would be that of the '*pale horse*' on which Death is mounted in the *Apocalypse*. It is neither mist nor water, but a something between both; its immense height gives it a wave or curve, a spreading here or condensation there, wonderful and indescribable."—*Swiss Journal.*]

(2) [In all Lord Byron's heroes we recognise,' though with infinite modifications, the same great characteristics—a high and audacious conception of the power of the mind,—an intense sensibility of passion,—

Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them—if that he
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this—what would'st thou with me?

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an almost boundless capacity of tumultuous emotion,—a haunting admiration of the grandeur of disordered power,—and, above all, a soul-felt, blood-felt delight in beauty. Parisina is full of it to overflowing; it breathes from every page of the "Prisoner of Chillon;" but it is in "Manfred" that it riots and revels among the streams, and waterfalls, and groves, and mountains, and heavens. There is in the character of Manfred more of the self-might of Byron than in all his previous productions. He has therein brought, with wonderful power, metaphysical conceptions into forms,—and we know of no poem in which the aspect of external nature is throughout lighted up with an expression at once so beautiful, solemn, and majestic. It is the poem, next to "Childe Harold," which we should give to a foreigner to read, that he might know something of Byron. Shakspeare has given to those abstractions of human life and being, which are truth in the intellect, forms as full, clear, glowing, as the idealised forms of visible nature. The very words of Ariel picture to us his beautiful being. In "Manfred," we see glorious but immature manifestations of similar power. The poet there creates, with delight, thoughts and feelings and fancies into visible forms, that he may cling and cleave to them, and clasp them in his passion. The beautiful Witch of the Alps seems exhaled from the luminous spray of the cataract,—as if the poet's eyes, unsated with the beauty of inanimate nature, gave spectral apparitions of loveliness to feed the pure passion of the poet's soul. —Professor Wilson.]

Man. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further. (1)
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.

Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

Man. A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

Witch. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

Man. Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who——but of her anon.
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe

(1) [There is something exquisitely beautiful in all this passage; and both the apparition and the dialogue are so managed, that the sense of their improbability is swallowed up in that of their beauty; and, without actually believing that such spirits exist or communicate themselves, we feel for the moment as if we stood in their presence. — JEFFREY.]

The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, (1) at Gadara,

(1) The philosopher Jamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and

As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until——

Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—
Yet there was one——

Witch. Spare not thyself—proceed.

Man. She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these

Anteros may be found in his life by Eunapius. It is well told.—["It is reported of him," says Eunapius, "that while he and his scholars were bathing in the hot baths of Gadara in Syria, a dispute arising concerning the baths, he, smiling, ordered his disciples to ask the inhabitants by what names the two lesser springs, that were nearer and handsomer than the rest, were called. To which the inhabitants replied, that 'the one was called Eros, and the other Anteros, but for what reason they knew not.' Upon which Jamblicus, sitting by one of the springs, put his hand in the water, and muttering some few words to himself, called up a fair-complexioned boy, with gold-coloured locks dangling from his back and breast, so that he looked like one that was washing: and then, going to the other spring, and doing as he had done before, called up another Cupid, with darker and more dishevelled hair: upon which both the Cupids clung about Jamblicus; but he presently sent them back to their proper places. After this, his friends submitted their belief to him in every thing."—E.]

Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

Witch. With thy hand?

Man. Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—
It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed—
I saw—and could not stanch it.

Witch. And for this—
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality——Away!

Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies;—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In fantasy, imagination, all

The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Crœsus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,
And that I have to learn—my sciences,
My long pursued and super-human art,
Is mortal here—I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

Witch. It may be
That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so—in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Man. I will not swear—Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

Witch. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough!—I may retire then—say!

Man. Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

Man. (*alone*). We are the fools of time and terror: Days

Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing—if they answer not—
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor (1); and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd. (2)

(1) [See *antè*, Vol. X. p. 87. *n.* — E.]

(2) The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedæmonians), and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the sophist, in his description of Greece. — [The following is the passage from Plutarch: — "It is related, that when Pau-

If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful —
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins —
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

[*Exit.*

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sanias was at Byzantium, he cast his eyes upon a young virgin named Cleonice, of a noble family there, and insisted on having her for a mistress. The parents, intimidated by his power, were under the hard necessity of giving up their daughter. The young woman begged that the light might be taken out of his apartments, that she might go to his bed in secrecy and silence. When she entered he was asleep, and she unfortunately stumbled upon the candlestick, and threw it down. The noise waked him suddenly, and he, in his confusion, thinking it was an enemy coming to assassinate him, unsheathed a dagger that lay by him, and plunged it into the virgin's heart. After this he could never rest. Her image appeared to him every night, and with a menacing tone repeated this heroic verse, —

'Go to the fate which pride and lust prepare!'

The allies, highly incensed at this infamous action, joined Cimon to besiege him in Byzantium. But he found means to escape thence; and, as he was still haunted by the spectre, he is said to have applied to a temple at Heraclea, where the manes of the dead were consulted. There he invoked the spirit of Cleonice, and entreated her pardon. She appeared, and told him 'he would soon be delivered from all his troubles, after his return to Sparta:' in which, it seems, his death was enigmatically foretold. These particulars we have from many historians." — LANGHORN's *Plutarch*, vol. iii. p. 279. "Thus we find," adds the translator, "that it was a custom in the Pagan as well as in the Hebrew theology, to conjure up the spirits of the dead; and that the witch of Endor was not the only witch in the world." — E.]

SCENE III.

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment(1)—a dead whirlpool's image:
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;

(1) ["Came to a morass; Hobhouse dismounted to get over well; I tried to pass my horse over; the horse sunk up to the chin, and of course he and I were in the mud together; bemired, but not hurt; laughed and rode on. Arrived at the Grindenwald; mounted again, and rode to the higher glacier—like *a frozen hurricane*."—*Swiss Journal.*—E.]

I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagued him with numbers —
He's Tyrant again!
With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea —
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish —
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,

And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation —
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation —
This work of a night —
This wreck of a realm — this deed of my doing —
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome! — Where's Nemesis?
Second Des. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.
Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.
Nem. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,

And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstay'd the hour — mount we our
clouds! (1) [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!
Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high command!
He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies; (2)
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its infinite of agonies—
And his the spirit of whatever is!

(1) [This we think is out of place, at least, if not out of character; and though the author may tell us that human calamities are naturally subjects of derision to the ministers of vengeance, yet we cannot be persuaded that satirical and political allusions are at all compatible with the feelings and impressions which it was here his business to maintain. — JEFFREY.]

(2) [MS. — "The comets herald through the { crackling / burning } skies." — E.]

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we await
His nod!

Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant—Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

Second Spirit. I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!

Third Spirit. Bow down and worship, slave!—
What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!

All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay,
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

Fourth Spirit. 'Twill be taught thee.

Man. 'Tis taught already;—many a night on the earth,

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory?—Crouch! I say.

Man. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.

The Spirits. Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces!—

First Des. Hence! Avaunt!—he's mine.
Prince of the Powers invisible! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,

Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be—be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

Nem. What doth he here then?

First Des. Let him answer that.

Man. Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

Nem. What would'st thou?

Man. Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.

Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?

Ari. Yea.

Nem. Whom would'st thou Uncharnel?

Man. One without a tomb—call up Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear! — Appear! — Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*

Man. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic — like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! Oh, God! that I should dread
To look upon the same — Astarte! — No,
I cannot speak to her — but bid her speak —
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee!

Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

Nem. My power extends no further. Prince of air!
It rests with thee alone — command her voice.

Ari. Spirit — obey this sceptre!

Nem. Silent still!

She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.

Man. Hear me, hear me —
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:
I have so much endured — so much endure —
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not — that I do bear
This punishment for both — that thou wilt be
One of the blessed — and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence — in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality —
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art — and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music — Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answer'd me — many things answer'd me —
Spirits and men — but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness — Speak to me!

Look on the fiends around — they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone —
Speak to me! though it be in wrath; — but say —
I reck not what — but let me hear thee once —
This once — once more!

Phantom of Astarte. Manfred!

Man. Say on, say on —
I live but in the sound — it is thy voice! [ills.

Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly Farewell!

Man. Yet one word more — am I forgiven?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. Say, shall we meet again?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

Phan. Manfred!

[*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.* (1)

Nem. She's gone, and will not be recall'd;
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

(1) [Over this fine drama, a moral feeling hangs like a sombrous thunder cloud. No other guilt but that so darkly shadowed out could have furnished so dreadful an illustration of the hideous aberrations of human nature, however noble and majestic, when left a prey to its desires, its passions, and its imagination. The beauty, at one time so innocently adored, is at last soiled, profaned, and violated. Affection, love, guilt, horror, remorse, and death, come in terrible succession, yet all darkly linked together. We think of Astarte as young, beautiful, innocent — guilty — lost — murdered — buried — judged — pardoned; but still, in her permitted visit to earth, speaking in a voice of sorrow, and with a countenance yet pale with mortal trouble. We had but a glimpse of her in her beauty and innocence; but, at last, she rises up before us in all the mortal silence of a ghost, with fixed, glazed, and passionless eyes, revealing death, judgment, and eternity. The moral breathes and burns in every word, — in sadness, misery, insanity, desolation, and death. The work is 'instinct with spirit,' — and in the agony and distraction, and all its dimly imagined causes, we behold, though broken up, confused, and shattered, the elements of a purer existence. — PROFESSOR WILSON.]

A Spirit. He is convulsed—This is to be a mortal
And seek the things beyond mortality.

Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
His torture tributary to his will.
Had he been one of us, he would have made
An awful spirit.

Nem. Hast thou further question
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

Man. None.

Nem. Then for a time farewell.

Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III. (1)

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?

Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

Man. Say,

(1) [The third Act, as originally written, being shown to the late Mr. Gifford, he expressed his unfavourable opinion of it very distinctly; and Mr. Murray transmitted this to Lord Byron. The result is told in the following extracts from his letters:—

Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

Her. All, my lord, are ready:
Here is the key and casket.

Man. It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.

Man. (*alone*). There is a calm upon me —
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:

"Venice, April 14. 1817. — The third Act is certainly d—d bad, and, like the Archbishop of Grenada's homily (which savoured of the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which it was written. It must *on no account* be published in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I have no chance of making any thing out of it. The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this Act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil possessed me. I am very glad, indeed, that you sent me Mr. Gifford's opinion without *deduction*. Do you suppose me such a booby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that I was not, and am not, convinced and convicted in my conscience of this same overt act of nonsense? I shall try at it again; in the mean time, lay it upon the shelf — the whole Drama I mean. — Recollect *not* to publish, upon pain of I know not what, until I have tried again at the third act. I am not sure that I shall try, and still less that I shall succeed if I do."

"Rome, May 5. — I have re-written the greater part, and returned what is not altered in the proof you sent me. The Abbot is become a good man, and the Spirits are brought in at the death. You will find, I think, some good poetry in this new Act, here and there; and if so, print it, without sending me farther proofs, *under Mr. Gifford's correction*, if he will have the goodness to overlook it." — E.]

It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred!

Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend guest?

Abbot. Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries: may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd!

Man. Proceed,—I listen.

Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits

Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things?

Abbot. My pious brethren — the scared peasantry — Even thy own vassals — who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy —
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply: whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself. — I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish! (1)

(1) [Thus far the text stands as originally penned: we subjoin the sequel of the scene as given in the first MS.: —

"*Abbot.* Then, hear and tremble! For the headstrong wretch
Who in the mail of innate hardihood
Would shield himself, and battle for his sins,
There is the stake on earth, and beyond earth eternal ——

Man. Charity, most reverend father,
Becomes thy lips so much more than this menace,
That I would call thee back to it: but say,
What wouldst thou with me?

Abbot. It may be there are
Things that would shake thee — but I keep them back,
And give thee till to-morrow to repent.
Then if thou dost not all devote thyself

Abbot. My son! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon; — with thyself

To penance, and with gift of all thy lands
To the monastery ——
Man. I understand thee, — well!
Abbot. Expect no mercy; I have warned thee.
Man. (*opening the casket*). Stop —
There is a gift for thee within this casket.
[MANFRED *opens the casket, strikes a light, and burns some incense.*
Ho! Ashtaroth!

The DEMON ASHTAROTH *appears, singing as follows*: —

The raven sits
On the raven-stone,
And his black wing flits
O'er the milk-white bone;
To and fro, as the night-winds blow,
The carcass of the assassin swings;
And there alone, on the raven-stone, (1)
The raven flaps his dusky wings.

The fetters creak — and his ebon beak
Croaks to the close of the hollow sound;
And this is the tune, by the light of the moon,
To which the witches dance their round —
Merrily, merrily, cheerily, cheerily,
Merrily, speeds the ball:
The dead in their shrouds, and the demons in clouds,
Flock to the witches' carnival.

Abbot. I fear thee not — hence — hence —
Avaunt thee, evil one! — help, ho! without there!
Man. Convey this man to the Shreckhorn — to its peak —
To its extremest peak — watch with him there
From now till sunrise; let him gaze, and know
He ne'er again will be so near to heaven.
But harm him not; and, when the morrow breaks,
Set him down safe in his cell — away with him!
Ash. Had I not better bring his brethren too,
Convent and all, to bear him company?

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(1) "Raven-stone (Rabenstein), a translation of the German word for the gibbet, which in Germany and Switzerland is permanent, and made of stone."

The choice of such remains — and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to heaven,—"Vengeance is mine alone!"
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

Man. Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer — nor purifying form
Of penitence — nor outward look — nor fast —
Nor agony — nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of heaven — can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge

Man. No, this will serve for the present. Take him up.
Ash. Come, friar! now an exorcism or two,
And we shall fly the lighter.

ASHTAROTH *disappears with the* ABBOT, *singing as follows:* —

A prodigal son, and a maid undone,
And a widow re-wedded within the year;
And a worldly monk, and a pregnant nun,
Are things which every day appear.

MANFRED *alone.*

Man. Why would this fool break in on me, and force
My art to pranks fantastical? — no matter,
It was not of my seeking. My heart sickens,
And weighs a fix'd foreboding on my soul:
But it is calm — calm as a sullen sea
After the hurricane; the winds are still,
But the cold waves swell high and heavily,
And there is danger in them. Such a rest
Is no repose. My life hath been a combat,
And every thought a wound, till I am scarr'd
In the immortal part of me. — What now?"]

Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.

Abbot. All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity. — Say on —
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

Man. When Rome's sixth emperor(1) was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death(2)
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said —
Some empire still in his expiring glance,
"It is too late — is this fidelity?"

(1) [Otho, being defeated in a general engagement near Brixellum, stabbed himself. Plutarch says, that, though he lived full as badly as Nero, his last moments were those of a philosopher. He comforted his soldiers who lamented his fortune, and expressed his concern for their safety, when *they* solicited to pay him the last friendly offices. Martial says:

"Sit Cato, dum vivit, sane vel Cæsare major,
Dum moritur, numquid major Othone fuit?" — E.]

(2) MS. —

"To shun { not loss of life, but / the torments of a } public death.
Choose between them."]

Abbot. And what of this?

Man. I answer with the Roman—
"It is too late!"

Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

Man. Ay — father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway—and soothe—and sue—
And watch all time—and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation:—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly; such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would——

Man. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness—
Some of disease—and some insanity—(1)
And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts;

(1) [This speech has been quoted in more than one of the sketches of the poet's own life. Much earlier, when only twenty-three years of age, he had thus *prophesied*:—"It seems as if I were to experience in my youth the greatest misery of old age. My friends fall around me, and I shall be left a lonely tree before I am withered. Other men can always take refuge in their families—*I* have no resource but my own reflections, and they present no prospect, here or hereafter, except the selfish satisfaction of surviving my betters. I am, indeed, very wretched. My days are listless, and my nights restless. I have very seldom any society; and when I have, I run out of it. I don't know that I sha'n't end with insanity."—*B. Letters*, 1811.]

For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still——

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell. (1)

[*Exit* MANFRED.

Abbot. This should have been a noble creature (2):
Hath all the energy which would have made [he

(1) ["Of the immortality of the soul, it appears to me that there can be little doubt—if we attend for a moment to the action of mind. It is in perpetual activity. I used to doubt of it—but reflection has taught me better. How far our future state will be individual; or, rather, how far it will at all resemble our present existence, is another question; but that the mind is eternal seems as probable as that the body is not so."—*B. Diary*, 1821.—"I have no wish to reject Christianity without investigation; on the contrary, I am very desirous of believing; for I have no happiness in my present unsettled notions on religion."—*B. Conversations with Kennedy*, 1823.]

(2) [There are three only, even among the great poets of modern times, who have chosen to depict, in their full shape and vigour, those agonies to which great and meditative intellects are, in the present progress of human history, exposed by the eternal recurrence of a deep and discontented scepticism. But there is only one who has dared to represent himself as the victim of those nameless and undefinable sufferings. Goethe chose for his doubts and his darkness the terrible disguise of the mysterious Faustus. Schiller, with still greater boldness, planted the same anguish in the restless, haughty, and heroic bosom of Wallenstein. But Byron has sought no external symbol in which to embody the inquietudes of his soul. He takes the world, and all that it inherit, for his arena and his spectators; and he

A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?

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displays himself before their gaze, wrestling unceasingly and ineffectually with the demon that torments him. At times, there is something mournful and depressing in his scepticism; but oftener it is of a high and solemn character, approaching to the very verge of a confiding faith. Whatever the poet may believe, we, his readers, always feel ourselves too much ennobled and elevated, even by his melancholy, not to be confirmed in our own belief by the very doubts so majestically conceived and uttered. His scepticism, if it ever approaches to a creed, carries with it its refutation in its grandeur. There is neither philosophy nor religion in those bitter and savage taunts which have been cruelly thrown out, from many quarters, against those moods of mind which are involuntary, and will not pass away; the shadows and spectres which still haunt his imagination may once have disturbed our own;—through his gloom there are frequent flashes of illumination;—and the sublime sadness which to him is breathed from the mysteries of mortal existence, is always joined with a longing after immortality, and expressed in language that is itself divine.—PROFESSOR WILSON.]

I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons (1)
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one

(1) "And it came to pass, that the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," &c.—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis*, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. (1) He is gone:
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE III.

The Mountains — The Castle of Manfred at some distance — A Terrace before a Tower. — Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other Dependants of* MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it, —
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.
Manuel. 'Twere dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.
Her. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle —
How many years is't?

(1) ["Pray, was Manfred's speech to the Sun still retained in Act third? I hope so: it was one of the best in the thing, and better than the Coliseum." — *B. Letters*, 1817.]

Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.
Her. There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?
Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;
Count Sigismund was proud,—but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.
Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.
Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman. (1)
Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.
Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;

(1) [MS. — "Some strange things in these few years." — E.]

Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—
As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
The lady Astarte, his ——(1)
Hush! who comes here?

(1) [The remainder of the third Act, in its original shape, ran thus:—

Her. Look — look — the tower —
The tower 's on fire. Oh, heavens and earth! what sound,
What dreadful sound is that? [*A crash like thunder.*
Manuel. Help, help, there! — to the rescue of the Count,—
The Count 's in danger, — what ho! there! approach!
[*The Servants, Vassals, and Peasantry approach, stupified with terror.*
If there be any of you who have heart
And love of human kind, and will to aid
Those in distress — pause not — but follow me —
The portal 's open, follow. [MANUEL *goes in.*
Her. Come — who follows?
What, none of ye? — ye recreants! shiver then
Without. I will not see old Manuel risk
His few remaining years unaided. [HERMAN *goes in.*
Vassal. Hark! —
No — all is silent — not a breath — the flame
Which shot forth such a blaze is also gone:
What may this mean? Let's enter!
Peasant. Faith, not I, —
Not that, if one, or two, or more, will join,
I then will stay behind; but, for my part,
I do not see precisely to what end.
Vassal. Cease your vain prating — come.
Manuel (*speaking within*). 'Tis all in vain —
He 's dead.
Her. (*within*). Not so — even now methought he moved;
But it is dark — so bear him gently out —
Softly — how cold he is! take care of his temples
In winding down the staircase.

Re-enter MANUEL *and* HERMAN, *bearing* MANFRED *in their Arms.*

Manuel. Hie to the castle, some of ye, and bring
What aid you can. Saddle the barb, and speed
For the leech to the city — quick! some water there!

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?

Her. Yonder in the tower.

Abbot. I must speak with him.

Manuel. 'Tis impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.

Abbot. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.

Her. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.

Abbot. Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.

Her. We dare not.

Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.

Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.

Abbot. Why so?

Her. His cheek is black — but there is a faint beat
Still lingering about the heart. Some water.
[*They sprinkle* MANFRED *with water: after a pause, he gives some signs of life.*
Manuel. He seems to strive to speak — come — cheerly, Count!
He moves his lips — canst hear him? I am old,
And cannot catch faint sounds.
[HERMAN *inclining his head and listening.*
Her. I hear a word
Or two — but indistinctly — what is next?
What's to be done? let's bear him to the castle.
[MANFRED *motions with his hand not to remove him.*
Manuel. He disapproves — and 'twere of no avail —
He changes rapidly.
Her. 'Twill soon be over.

Manuel. But step this way,
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. (1)

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall, (2)
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and

(1) [The opening of this scene is, perhaps, the finest passage in the drama; and its solemn, calm, and majestic character throws an air of grandeur over the catastrophe, which was in danger of appearing extravagant, and somewhat too much in the style of the "Devil and Dr. Faustus."—WILSON.]

(2) ["Drove at midnight to see the Coliseum by moonlight: but what can I say of the Coliseum? It must be *seen;* to describe it I should have thought impossible, if I had not read 'Manfred.' To see it aright, as the Poet of the North tells us of the fair Melrose, one 'must see it by the pale moonlight.' The stillness of night, the whispering echoes, the moonlight shadows, and the awful grandeur of the impending ruins, form a scene of romantic sublimity, such as Byron alone could describe as it deserves. His description is the very thing itself."—MATTHEWS's *Diary of an Invalid.*]

More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot—Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;—
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.—
'Twas such a night!
'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;
But is not yet all lost.

Man. Thou know'st me not;
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!

Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace me?

Man. Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.

Abbot. What dost thou mean?

Man. Look there!
What dost thou see?

Abbot. Nothing.

Man. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest?

Abbot. That which should shake me,—but I fear it not—
I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds: he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

Man. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but

His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!
Abbot. And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this fiend:—
What doth he here?
Man. Why—ay—what doth he here?—
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.
Abbot. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
Glares forth the immortality of hell—
Avaunt!——
Man. Pronounce—what is thy mission?
Spirit. Come!
Abbot. What art thou, unknown being? answer!—speak!
Spirit. The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.
Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?
Spirit. Thou'lt know anon—Come! come!
Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!
Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.
Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren.—
Rise! [*Other Spirits rise up.*
Abbot. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I say,—
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name——
Spirit. Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away! away!
Man. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.
Spirit. Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal?—Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!
Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest!
My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance—daring—
And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill

In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—

Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee——

Man. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

Abbot. Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat

The accents rattle—Give thy prayers to Heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.

Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?

Man. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die. (1)

[MANFRED *expires.*

Abbot. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone. (2)

(1) [In the first edition, this line was accidentally left out. On discovering the omission, Lord Byron wrote to Mr. Murray—"You have destroyed the whole effect and moral of the poem, by omitting the last line of Manfred's speaking."—E.]

(2) [In June, 1820, Lord Byron thus writes to his publisher:—"Enclosed is something which will interest you; to wit, the opinion of the greatest man in Germany—perhaps in Europe—upon one of the great men of your advertisements (all 'famous hands,' as Jacob Tonson used to say of his raggamuffins)—in short, a critique of Goethe's upon *Manfred*. There is the original, an English translation, and an Italian one: keep them all in your archives; for the opinions of such a man as Goethe, whether favourable or not, are always interesting—and this is more so, as favourable. His Faust I never read, for I don't know German; but Matthew Monk Lewis, in 1816, at Coligny, translated most of it to me *viva voce*, and I was naturally much struck with it: but it was the Steinbach and the Jungfrau, and something else, much more than Faustus, that made me write Manfred. The first scene, however, and that of Faustus are very similar."

The following is the extract from Goethe's *Kunst und Altherthum* (*i. e.* Art and Antiquity (which the above letter enclosed:—

"Byron's tragedy, 'Manfred,' was to me a wonderful phenomenon, and one that closely touched me. This singularly intellectual poet has taken my Faustus to himself, and extracted from it the strongest nourishment for his hypochondriac humour. He has made use of the impelling principles in his own way, for his own purposes, so that no one of them remains the same; and it is particularly on this account that I cannot enough admire his genius. The whole is in this way so completely formed anew, that it

would be an interesting task for the critic to point out, not only the alterations he has made, but their degree of resemblance with, or dissimilarity to, the original: in the course of which I cannot deny, that the gloomy heat of an unbounded and exuberant despair becomes at last oppressive to us. Yet is the dissatisfaction we feel always connected with esteem and admiration.

"We find thus, in this tragedy, the quintessence of the most astonishing talent born to be its own tormentor. The character of Lord Byron's life and poetry hardly permits a just and equitable appreciation. He has often enough confessed what it is that torments him. He has repeatedly portrayed it; and scarcely any one feels compassion for this intolerable suffering, over which he is ever laboriously ruminating. There are, properly speaking, two females who-e phantoms for ever haunt him, and which, in this piece also, perform principal parts — one under the name of Astarte, the other without form or actual presence, and merely a voice. Of the horrid occurrence which took place with the former, the following is related: — When a bold and enterprising young man, he won the affections of a Florentine lady.* Her husband discovered the amour, and murdered his wife; but the murderer was the same night found dead in the street, and there was no one on whom any suspicion could be attached. Lord Byron removed from Florence, and these spirits haunted him all his life after.

"This romantic incident is rendered highly probable by innumerable allusions to it in his poems. As, for instance, when turning his sad contemplations inwards, he applies to himself the fatal history of the king of Sparta. It is as follows: — Pausanias, a Lacedæmonian general, acquires glory by the important victory at Platæa, but afterwards forfeits the confidence of his countrymen through his arrogance, obstinacy, and secret intrigues with the enemies of his country. This man draws upon himself the heavy guilt of innocent blood, which attends him to his end; for, while commanding the fleet of the allied Grecks, in the Black Sea, he is

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* ["The grave confidence with which the venerable critic traces the fancies of his brother poet to real persons and events, making no difficulty even of a double murder at Florence to furnish grounds for his theory, affords an amusing instance of the disposition so prevalent throughout Europe, to picture Byron as a man of marvels and mystcries, as well in his life as his poetry. To these exaggerated, or wholly false notions of him, the numerous fictions palmed upon the world of his romantic tours and wonderful adventures, in places he never saw, and with persons that never existed, have, no doubt, considerably contributed; and the consequence is, so utterly out of truth and nature are the representations of his life and character long current upon the Continent, that it may be questioned whether the real 'flesh and blood' hero of these pages, — the social, practical-minded, and, with all his faults and eccentricities, *English* Lord Byron, — may not, to the over-exalted imaginations of most of his foreign admirers, appear but an ordinary, unromantic, and prosaic personage." — MOORE'S *Life of Byron.*]

inflamed with a violent passion for a Byzantine maiden. After long resistance, he at length obtains her from her parents, and she is to be delivered up to him at night. She modestly desires the servant to put out the lamp, and, while groping her way in the dark, she overturns it. Pausanias is awakened from his sleep — apprehensive of an attack from murderers, he seizes his sword, and destroys his mistress. The horrid sight never leaves him. Her shade pursues him unceasingly, and he implores for aid in vain from the gods and the exorcising priests.

"That poet must have a lacerated heart who selects such a scene from antiquity, appropriates it to himself, and burdens his tragic image with it. The following soliloquy, which is overladen with gloom and a weariness of life, is, by this remark, rendered intelligible. We recommend it as an exercise to all friends of declamation Hamlet's soliloquy appears improved upon here." — Goethe here subjoins Manfred's soliloquy, beginning "We are the fools of time and terror," in which the allusion to Pausanias occurs. The reader will not be sorry to pass from this German criticism to that of the Edinburgh Review on Manfred. — "This is, undoubtedly, a work of great genius and originality. Its worst fault, perhaps, is that it fatigues and overawes us by the uniformity of its terror and solemnity. Another, is the painful and offensive nature of the circumstance on which its distress is ultimately founded. The lyrical songs of the Spirits are too long, and not all excellent. There is something of pedantry in them now and then; and even Manfred deals in classical allusions a little too much. If we were to consider it as a proper drama, or even as a finished poem, we should be obliged to add, that it is far too indistinct and unsatisfactory. But this we take to be according to the design and conception of the author. He contemplated but a dim and magnificent sketch of a subject which did not admit of more accurate drawing or more brilliant colouring. Its obscurity is a part of its grandeur; — and the darkness that rests upon it, and the smoky distance in which it is lost, are all devices to increase its majesty, to stimulate our curiosity, and to impress us with deeper awe.—It is suggested, in an ingenious paper in a late number of the Edinburgh Magazine, that the general conception of this piece, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, have been borrowed from 'The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus,' of Marlow*; and a variety of passages are quoted, which the author considers as similar, and, in many respects, superior to others in the poem before us. We cannot agree in the general terms of the conclusion; but there is no doubt a certain resemblance, both in some of the topics that are suggested, and in the cast of the diction in which they are

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* [On reading this, Lord Byron wrote from Venice: — "Jeffrey is very kind about Manfred, and defends its originality, which I did not know that any body had attacked. As to the germs of it, they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh, shortly before I left Switzerland. I have the whole scene of Manfred before me, as if it was but yesterday, and could point it out, spot by spot, torrent and all." — E.]

expressed. Thus, to induce Faustus to persist in his unlawful studies, he is told that the Spirits of the Elements will serve him, —

> 'Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
> Shadowing more beauty in their ayrie browes,
> Than have the white breasts of the Queene of Love.'

And again, when the amorous sorcerer commands Helen of Troy to revive again to be his paramour, he addresses her, on her first appearance, in these rapturous lines —

> 'Was this the face that launcht a thousand ships,
> And burn'd the topless towers of Ilium?
> Sweet Helen! make me immortal with a kiss,
> Her lips suck forth my soule! — see where it flies
> Come, Helen, come give me my soule againe,
> Here will I dwell, for heaven is on that lip,
> And all is dross that is not Helena.
> O! thou art fairer than the evening ayre,
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand starres;
> More lovely than the monarch of the skyes,
> In wanton Arethusa's azure arms!'

The catastrophe, too, is bewailed in verses of great elegance and classical beauty —

> 'Cut is the branch that might have growne full straight,
> And burned is Apollo's laurel bough
> That sometime grew within this learned man.
> Faustus is gone! — regard his hellish fall,
> Whose findful torture may exhort the wise,
> Only to wonder at unlawful things!

But these, and many other smooth and fanciful verses in this curious old drama, prove nothing, we think, against the originality of Manfred; for there is nothing to be found there of the pride, the abstraction, and the heart-rooted misery in which that originality consists. Faustus is a vulgar sorcerer, tempted to sell his soul to the devil for the ordinary price of sensual pleasure, and earthly power and glory; and who shrinks and shudders in agony when the forfeit comes to be exacted. The style, too, of Marlow, though elegant and scholarlike, is weak and childish compared with the depth and force of much of Lord Byron; and the disgusting buffoonery and low farce of which his piece is principally made up, place it more in contrast, than in any terms of comparison, with that of his noble successor. In the tone and pitch of the composition, as well as in the character of the diction in the more solemn parts, Manfred reminds us much more of the 'Prometheus' of Æschylus, * than of any more modern performance. The

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* ["Of the 'Prometheus' of Æschylus I was passionately fond as a boy (it was one of the Greek plays we read thrice a year at Harrow); indeed, that and the 'Medea' were the only ones, except the 'Seven before

tremendous solitude of the principal person — the supernatural beings with whom alone he holds communion — the guilt — the firmness — the misery —are all points of resemblance, to which the grandeur of the poetic imagery only gives a more striking effect. The chief differences are, that the subject of the Greek poet was sanctified and exalted by the established belief of his country, and that his terrors are nowhere tempered with the sweetness which breathes from so many passages of his English rival." — JEFFREY.]

Thebes,' which ever much pleased me. The Prometheus, if not exactly in my plan, has always been so much in my head, that I can easily conceive its influence over all or any thing that I have written; but I deny Marlow and his progeny, and beg that you will do the same." — *B. Letters*, 1817.]

THE

LAMENT OF TASSO.

At Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention, than the residence or the monument of Ariosto — at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed, and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon. — [The original MS. of this poem is dated, "The Apennines, April 20. 1817." It was written in consequence of Lord Byron having visited Ferrara, for a single day, on his way to Florence. In a letter from Rome, he says—"The 'Lament of Tasso,' which I sent from Florence, has, I trust, arrived. I look upon it as a 'These be good rhymes!' as Pope's papa said to him when he was a boy." — E.]

[In a moment of dissatisfaction with himself, or during some melancholy mood, when his soul felt the worthlessness of fame and glory, Lord Byron told the world that his muse should, for a long season, shroud herself in solitude (see *antè*, Vol. X. p. 5.); and every true lover of genius lamented that her lofty music was to cease. But there was a tide in his spirit obeying the laws of its nature, and not to be controlled by any human will. When he said that he was to be silent, he looked, perhaps, into the inner regions of his soul, and saw there a dim, hard, and cheerless waste, like the sand of the sea-shore; but the ebbed waves of passion in due course returned, and the scene was restored to its former beauty and magnificence, — its foam, its splendours, and its thunder. The mind of a mighty poet cannot submit even to chains of its own imposing: when it feels most enslaved, even then, perhaps, is it about to become most free; and one sudden flash may raise it from the darkness of its despondency up to the pure air of untroubled confidence. It required, therefore, but small knowledge of human nature, to assure ourselves that the obligation under which Lord Byron had laid himself could not bind, and that the potent spirit within him would laugh to scorn whatever dared to curb the frenzy of its own inspirations.

It was not long, therefore, till he again came forth in his perfect strength, and exercised that dominion over our spirits which is truly a power too noble to be possessed without being wielded. Though all his heroes are of one family, yet are they a noble band of brothers, whose countenances and whose souls are strongly distinguished by peculiar characteristics. Each personage, as he advances before us, reminds us of some other being, whose looks, thoughts, words, and deeds had troubled us by their wild and perturbed grandeur. But though all the same, yet are they all strangely different. We hail each successive existence with a profounder sympathy; and we are lost in wonder, in fear, and in sorrow, at the infinitely varied struggles, the endless and agonising modifications of the human passions, as they drive along through every gate and avenue of the soul, darkening or brightening, elevating or laying prostrate.

From such agitating and terrific pictures, it is delightful to turn to those compositions in which Lord Byron has allowed his soul to sink down into gentler and more ordinary feelings. Many beautiful and pathetic strains have flowed from his heart, of which the tenderness is as touching as the grandeur of his nobler works is agitating and sublime. To those, indeed, who looked deeply into his poetry, there never was at any time a want of pathos; but it was a pathos so subduing and so profound, that even the poet himself seemed afraid of being delivered up unto it; nay, he seemed ashamed of being overcome by emotions, which the gloomy pride of his intellect often vainly strove to scorn; and he dashed the weakness from his heart, and the tear from his eyes, like a man suddenly assailed by feelings which he wished to hide, and which, though true to his nature, were inconsistent with the character which that mysterious nature had been forced, as in self-defence, to assume.

But there is one poem in which he has almost wholly laid aside all remembrance of the darker and stormier passions; in which the tone of his spirit and his voice at once is changed, and where he who seemed to care only for agonies, and remorse, and despair, and death, and insanity, in all their most appalling forms, shows that he has a heart that can feed on the purest sympathies of our nature, and deliver itself up to the sorrows, the sadness, and the melancholy of humbler souls. The "Prisoner of Chillon" is a poem over which Infancy has shed its first mysterious tears for sorrows so alien to its own happy innocence, — over which the gentle, pure, and pious soul of Woman has brooded with ineffable, and yearning, and bursting tenderness of affection, — and over which old Age, almost loosened from this world, has bowed his hoary head in delighted approbation of that fraternal love, whose beauty and simplicity fling a radiance over the earth he is about to leave, and exhibit our fallen nature in near approximation to the glories of its ultimate destiny. The "Lament" possesses much of the tenderness and pathos of the "Prisoner of Chillon." Lord Byron has not delivered himself unto any one wild and fearful vision of the imprisoned Tasso, — he has not dared to allow himself to rush forward with headlong passion into the horrors of his dungeon, and to describe, as he could fearfully have done, the conflict and agony of his uttermost despair, — but he shows us the poet sitting in his cell, and singing there — a low, melancholy, wailing lament, sometimes, indeed, bordering on utter wretchedness, but oftener partaking of a settled grief, occasionally subdued into mournful resignation, cheered by delightful remembrances, and elevated by the confident hope of an immortal fame. His is the gathered grief of many years, over which his soul has brooded, till she has in some measure lost the power of misery; and this soliloquy is one which we can believe he might have uttered to himself any morning, or noon, or night of his solitude, as he seemed to be half communing with his own heart, and half addressing the ear of that human nature from which he was shut out, but of which he felt the continual and abiding presence within his imagination.—Wilson.]

THE

LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

Long years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,(1)
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air

(1) [Tasso's biographer, the Abate Serassi, has left it without doubt, that the first cause of the poet's punishment was his desire to be occasionally, or altogether, free from his servitude at the court of Alfonso. In 1575, Tasso resolved to visit Rome, and enjoy the indulgence of the jubilee; "and this error," says the Abate, "increasing the suspicion already entertained, that he was in search of another service, was the origin of his misfortunes. On his return to Ferrara, the Duke refused to admit him to an audience, and he was repulsed from the houses of all the dependants of the court; and not one of the promises which the Cardinal Albano had obtained for him were carried into effect. Then it was that Tasso—after having suffered these hardships for some time, seeing himself constantly discountenanced by the Duke and the Princesses, abandoned by his friends, and derided by his enemies—could no longer contain himself within the bounds of moderation, but, giving vent to his choler, publicly broke forth into the most injurious expressions imaginable, both against the Duke and all the house of Este, cursing his past service, and retracting all the praises he had ever given in his verses to those princes, or to any individual connected with them, declaring that they were all a gang of poltroons, ingrates, and scoundrels (poltroni, ingrati, e ribaldi). For this offence he was arrested, conducted to the hospital of St. Anna, and confined in a solitary cell as a madman."—Serassi, *Vita del Tasso.*]

Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitternes is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.(1)
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;

(1) [In the hospital of St. Anna, at Ferrara, they show a cell, over the door of which is the following inscription:—"Rispettate, O posteri, la celebrità di questa stanza, dove Torquato Tasso, inferno più di tristezza che delirio, ditenuto dimorò anni vii. mesi ii., scrisse verse e prose, e fù rimesso in libertà ad instanza della città di Bergamo, nel giorno vi. Luglio, 1586."—The dungeon is below the ground floor of the hospital, and the light penetrates through its grated window from a small yard, which seems to have been common to other cells. It is nine paces long, between five and six wide, and about seven feet high. The bedstead, so they tell, has been carried off piecemeal, and the door half cut away by the devotion of those whom "the verse and prose" of the prisoner have brought to Ferrara. The poet was confined in this room from the middle of March 1579 to December 1580, when he was removed to a contiguous apartment much larger, in which, to use his own expressions, he could "philosophise and walk about." The inscription is incorrect as to the immediate cause of his enlargement, which was promised to the city of Bergamo, but was carried into effect at the intercession of Don Vincenzo Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua. — HOBHOUSE.]

And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for Him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employ'd my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done:—(1)
My long-sustaining friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But thou, my young creation! my soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,

(1) [The opening lines bring the poet before us at once, as if the door of the dungeon was thrown open. From this bitter complaint, how nobly the unconquered bard rises into calm, and serene, and dignified exultation over the beauty of "that young creation, his soul's child," the Gierusalemme Liberata. The exultation of conscious genius then dies away, and we behold him, "bound between distraction and disease," no longer in an inspired mood, but sunk into the lowest prostration of human misery. There is something terrible in this transition from divine rapture to degraded agony.—WILSON.]

Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad—and why?
Oh Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply? (1)
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 'tis their fate
To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity.

(1) [In a letter written to his friend Scipio Gonzaga, shortly after his confinement, Tasso exclaims—"Ah, wretched me! I had designed to write, besides two epic poems of most noble argument, four tragedies, of which I had formed the plan. I had schemed, too, many works in prose, on subjects the most lofty, and most useful to human life; I had designed to write philosophy with eloquence, in such a manner that there might remain of me an eternal memory in the world. Alas! I had expected to close my life with glory and renown; but now, oppressed by the burden of so many calamities, I have lost every prospect of reputation and of honour. The fear of perpetual imprisonment increases my melancholy; the indignities which I suffer augment it; and the squalor of my beard, my hair, and habit, the sordidness and filth, exceedingly annoy me. Sure am I, that, if SHE who so little has corresponded to my attachment—if she saw me in such a state, and in such affliction—she would have some compassion on me."—*Opere*, t. x. p. 387.]

And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,
And dim the little light that's left behind
With needless torture, as their tyrant will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill: (1)
With these and with their victims am I class'd,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd;
'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:
So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet,
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives—Oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot!—
Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;—

(1) [For nearly the first year of his confinement Tasso endured all the horrors of a solitary cell, and was under the care of a gaoler whose chief virtue, although he was a poet and a man of letters, was a cruel obedience to the commands of his prince. His name was Agostino Mosti. Tasso says of him, in a letter to his sister, "ed usa meco ogni sorte di rigore ed inumanità." — Hobhouse.]

While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,(1)
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our Stoical success?
No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest;(2)
Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

(1) [This fearful picture is finely contrasted with that which Tasso draws of himself in youth, when nature and meditation were forming his wild, romantic, and impassioned genius. Indeed, the great excellence of the "Lament" consists in the ebbing and flowing of the noble prisoner's soul;—his feelings often come suddenly from afar off,—sometimes gentle airs are breathing, and then all at once arise the storms and tempest,—the gloom, though black as night while it endures, gives way to frequent bursts of radiance,—and when the wild strain is closed, our pity and commiseration are blended with a sustaining and elevating sense of the grandeur and majesty of his character.—Wilson.]

(2) [Not long after his imprisonment, Tasso appealed to the mercy of Alfonso, in a canzone of great beauty, couched in terms so respectful and pathetic, as must have moved, it might be thought, the severest bosom to relent. The heart of Alfonso was, however, impregnable to the appeal; and Tasso, in another ode to the princesses, whose pity he invoked in the name of their own mother, who had herself known, if not the like horrors,

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair, (1)
But all unquench'd is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,
Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck,—forth flies the all-ethereal dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A Princess was no love-mate for a bard;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground;

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the like solitude of imprisonment, and bitterness of soul. "Considered merely as poems," says Black, "these canzoni are extremely beautiful; but, if we contemplate them as the productions of a mind diseased, they form important documents in the history of man."—*Life of Tasso*, vol. ii. p. 408.]

(1) [As to the indifference which the Princess is said to have exhibited for the misfortunes of Tasso, and the little effort she made to obtain his liberty, this is one of the negative arguments founded on an hypothesis that may be easily destroyed by a thousand others equally plausible. Was not the Princess anxious to avoid her own ruin? In taking too warm an interest for the poet, did she not risk destroying herself, without saving him?—Foscolo.]

Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd
Thy lineaments in beauty that dismay'd —
Oh! not dismay'd — but awed, like One above;
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass —
I know not how — thy genius master'd mine —
My star stood still before thee: — if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me — but for *thee.*
The very love which lock'd me to my chain
Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of Pain.(1)

VI.

It is no marvel — from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, — which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the Wise

(1) [Tasso's profound and unconquerable love for Leonora, sustaining itself without hope throughout years of darkness and solitude, breathes a moral dignity over all his sentiments, and we feel the strength and power of his noble spirit in the un-upbraiding devotedness of his passion. — Wilson.]

Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;—
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine—the world was past away—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII.

I loved all Solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant;—had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave, (1)
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore;
The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.

(1) [MS. — "My mind like theirs { corrupted / or / adapted } to its grave." — E.]

What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,(1)
But with a sense of its decay:—I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,
Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
But Spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
It may be, tempt me further,—and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?

(1) ["Nor do I lament," wrote Tasso, shortly after his confinement, "that my heart is deluged with almost constant misery, that my head is always heavy and often painful, that my sight and hearing are much impaired, and that all my frame is become spare and meagre; but, passing all this with a short sigh, what I would bewail is the infirmity of my mind. My mind sleeps, not thinks; my fancy is chill, and forms no pictures; my negligent senses will no longer furnish the images of things; my hand is sluggish in writing, and my pen seems as if it shrunk from the office. I feel as if I were chained in all my operations, and as if I were overcome by an unwonted numbness and oppressive stupor."—*Opere*, t. viii. p. 258.]

Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling — that is o'er ; —
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd
My brain against these bars, as the sun flash'd
In mockery through them ; — if I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, — 'tis that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp Madness deep into my memory,
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No — it shall be immortal ! — and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake. (1)
While thou, Ferrara ! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy heartless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown, —
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls ! (2)

(1) [MS. — " Which { nations yet / after-days } shall visit for my sake." — E.]

(2) [Those who indulge in the dreams of earthly retribution will observe, that the cruelty of Alfonso was not left without its recompense, even in his own person. He survived the affection of his subjects and of his dependants, who deserted him at his death ; and suffered his body to be interred without princely or decent honours. His last wishes were neglected ; his testament cancelled. His kinsman, Don Cæsar, shrank from the excommunication of the Vatican, and, after a short struggle, or rather suspense, Ferrara passed away for ever from the dominion of the house of Este. — Hobhouse.]

And thou, Leonora!—thou—who wert ashamed
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me —
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this—shall be a consecrated spot!
But Thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.(1)

(1) [In July, 1586, after a confinement of more than seven years, Tasso was released from his dungeon. In the hope of receiving his mother's dowry, and of again beholding his sister Cornelia, he shortly after visited Naples, where his presence was welcomed with every demonstration of esteem and admiration. Being on a visit at Mola di Gaeta, he received the following remarkable tribute of respect. Marco di Sciarra, the notorious captain of a numerous troop of banditti, hearing where the great poet was, sent to compliment him, and offered him not only a free passage, but protection by the way, and assured him that he and his followers would be proud to execute his orders. See *Manso, Vita del Tasso*, p. 219. Mr. Rogers thus introduces the incident into his description of the life, "fearful and full of change," of the mountain-robber:—

> "Time was, the trade was nobler, if not honest;
> When they that robb'd were men of better faith
> Than kings or pontiffs; when, such reverence
> The poet drew among the woods and wilds,
> A voice was heard, that never bade to spare,
> Crying aloud, 'Hence to the distant hills!
> Tasso approaches; he, whose song beguiles
> The day of half its hours; whose sorcery
> Dazzles the sense, turning our forest-glades
> To lists that blaze with gorgeous armoury,

No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.(1)
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever — but too late! (2)

Our mountain-caves to regal palaces.
Hence, nor descend till he and his are gone.
Let HIM fear nothing!' " — E.]

(1) [MS. — " As none in life could {wring / wrench / rend} thee from my heart."—E.]

(2) [The " pleasures of imagination" have been explained and justified by Addison in prose, and by Akenside in verse: but there are moments of real life when its miseries and its necessities seem to overpower and destroy them. The history of mankind, however, furnishes proofs, that no bodily suffering, no adverse circumstances, operating on our material nature, will extinguish the spirit of imagination. Perhaps there is no instance of this so very affecting and so very sublime as the case of Tasso. They who have seen the dark, horror-striking dungeon-hole at Ferrara, in which he was confined seven years under the imputation of madness, will have had this truth impressed upon their hearts in a manner never to be erased. In this vault, of which the sight makes the hardest heart shudder, the poet employed himself in finishing and correcting his immortal epic poem. Lord Byron's " Lament " on this subject is as sublime and profound a lesson in morality, and in the pictures of the recesses of the human soul, as it is a production most eloquent, most pathetic, most vigorous, and most elevating among the gifts of the Muse. The bosom which is not touched with it — the fancy which is not warmed, — the understanding which is not enlightened and exalted by it, is not fit for human intercourse. If Lord Byron had written nothing but this, to deny him the praise of a grand poet would have been flagrant injustice or gross stupidity. — SIR EGERTON BAYDGES.]

BEPPO,

A VENETIAN STORY.

Rosalind. Farewell, Monsieur Traveller: Look, you lisp, and wear strange suits: disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your Nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think that you have swam in a *Gondola.*

As You Like It, Act IV. Sc. 1.

Annotation of the Commentators.

That is, been at *Venice,* which was much visited by the young English gentlemen of those times, and was then what *Paris* is *now* — the seat of all dissoluteness. S. A. (1)

(1) [Roger Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's tutor, says, in his "Schoolmaster" — "Although I was only nine days at Venice, I saw, in that little time, more liberty to sin, than ever I heard tell of in the city of London in nine years." — E.]

[Beppo was written at Venice, in October, 1817, and acquired great popularity immediately on its publication in the May of the following year. Lord Byron's letters show that he attached very little importance to it at the time. He was not aware that he had opened a new vein, in which his genius was destined to work out some of its brightest triumphs. "I have written," he says to Mr. Murray, "a poem humorous, in or after the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft, and founded on a Venetian anecdote which amused me. It is called *Beppo* — the short name for Giuseppo, — that is, the *Joe* of the Italian Joseph. It has politics and ferocity." Again — "Whistlecraft is my immediate model, but Berni is the father of that kind of writing; which, I think, suits our language, too, very well. We shall see by this experiment. It will, at any rate, show that I can write cheerfully, and repel the charge of monotony and mannerism." He wished Mr. Murray to accept of Beppo as a free gift, or, as he chose to express it, "as part of the contract for Canto Fourth of Childe Harold;" adding, however, — "if it pleases, you shall have more in the same mood; for I know the Italian *way of life*, and, as for the *verse* and the *passions*, I have them still in tolerable vigour."

The Right Honourable John Hookham Frere has, then, by Lord Byron's confession, the merit of having first introduced the *Bernesque* style into our language; but his performance, entitled "Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, of Stowmarket, in Suffolk, Harness and Collar Makers, intended to comprise the most interesting Particulars relating to King Arthur and his Round Table," though it delighted all elegant and learned readers, obtained at the time little notice from the public at large, and is already almost forgotten. For the causes of this failure, about which Mr. Rose and others have written at some length, it appears needless to look further than the last sentence we have been quoting from the letters of the author of the more successful *Beppo*. Whistlecraft had the *verse:* it had also

the humour, the wit, and even the poetry of the Italian model; but it wanted the life of actual manners, and the strength of stirring passions. Mr. Frere had forgot, or was, with all his genius, unfit to profit by remembering, that the poets, whose style he was adopting, always made their style *appear* a secondary matter. They never failed to embroider their merriment on the texture of a really interesting story. Lord Byron perceived this; and avoiding his immediate master's one fatal error, and at least equalling him in the excellences which he did display, engaged at once the sympathy of readers of every class, and became substantially the founder of a new species of English poetry.

In justice to Mr. Frere, however, whose "Specimen" has long been out of print, we must take this opportunity of showing how completely, as to style and versification, he had anticipated Beppo and Don Juan. In the introductions to his cantos, and in various detached passages of mere description, he had produced precisely the sort of effect at which Lord Byron aimed in what we may call the secondary, or merely ornamental, parts of his Comic Epic. For example, this is the beginning of Whistlecraft's first canto: —

"I've often wish'd that I could write a book,
Such as all English people might peruse;
I never should regret the pains it took,
That 's just the sort of fame that I should choose:
To sail about the world like Captain Cook,
I 'd sling a cot up for my favourite Muse,
And we 'd take verses out to Demarara,
To New South Wales, and up to Niagara.

"Poets consume exciseable commodities,
They raise the nation's spirit when victorious,
They drive an export trade in whims and oddities,
Making our commerce and revenue glorious;
As an industrious and pains-taking body 'tis
That Poets should be reckon'd meritorious:
And therefore I submissively propose
To erect one Board for Verse and one for Prose.

"Princes protecting Sciences and Art
I've often seen, in copper-plate and print;
I never saw them elsewhere, for my part,
And therefore I conclude there 's nothing in 't

But every body knows the Regent's heart;
I trust he won't reject a well-meant hint;
Each Board to have twelve members, with a seat
To bring them in per ann. five hundred neat:—

" From Princes I descend to the Nobility:
In former times all persons of high stations,
Lords, Baronets, and Persons of gentflity,
Paid twenty guineas for the dedications:
This practice was attended with utility;
The patrons lived to future generations,
The poets lived by their industrious earning,—
So men alive and dead could live by Learning.

" Then, twenty guineas was a little fortune;
Now, we must starve unless the times should mend:
Our poets now-a-days are deem'd importune
If their addresses are diffusely penn'd;
Most fashionable authors make a short one
To their own wife, or child, or private friend,
To show their independence, I suppose;
And that may do for Gentlemen like those.

" Lastly, the common people I beseech—
Dear People! if you think my verses clever,
Preserve with care your noble Parts of speech,
And take it as a maxim to endeavour
To talk as your good mothers used to teach,
And then these lines of mine may last for ever;
And don't confound the language of the nation
With long-tail'd words in *osity* and *ation*.

" I think that Poets (whether Whig or Tory)
(Whether they go to meeting or to church)
Should study to promote their country's glory
With patriotic, diligent research;
That children yet unborn may learn the story,
With grammars, dictionaries, canes, and birch:
It stands to reason—This was Homer's plan,
And we must do—like him—the best we can.

" Madoc and Marmion, and many more,
Are out in print, and most of them have sold;
Perhaps together they may make a score;
Richard the First has had his story told,
But there were Lords and Princes long before,
That had behaved themselves like warriors bold:
Among the rest there was the great King Arthur,
What hero's fame was ever carried farther? "

The following description of King Arthur's Christmas at Carlisle is equally meritorious: —

"The Great King Arthur made a sumptuous Feast,
And held his Royal Christmas at Carlisle,
And thither came the Vassals, most and least,
From every corner of this British Isle;
And all were entertain'd, both man and beast,
According to their rank, in proper style;
The steeds were fed and litter'd in the stable,
The ladies and the knights sat down to table.

"The bill of fare (as you may well suppose)
Was suited to those plentiful old times,
Before our modern luxuries arose,
With truffles and ragouts, and various crimes;
And therefore, from the original in prose
I shall arrange the catalogue in rhymes:
They served up salmon, venison, and wild boars
By hundreds, and by dozens, and by scores.

"Hogsheads of honey, kilderkins of mustard,
Muttons, and fatted beeves, and bacon swine;
Herons and bitterns, peacock, swan and bustard,
Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and in fine
Plum-puddings, pancakes, apple-pies and custard:
And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine,
With mead, and ale, and cyder of our own;
For porter, punch, and negus were not known.

"The noise and uproar of the scullery tribe,
All pilfering and scrambling in their calling,
Was past all powers of language to describe —
The din of manful oaths and female squalling:
The sturdy porter, huddling up his bribe,
And then at random breaking heads and bawling,
Outcries, and cries of order, and contusions,
Made a confusion beyond all confusions;

"Beggars and vagabonds, blind, lame, and sturdy,
Minstrels and singers with their various airs,
The pipe, the tabor, and the hurdy-gurdy,
Jugglers and mountebanks with apes and bears,
Continued from the first day to the third day,
An uproar like ten thousand Smithfield fairs;
There were wild beasts and foreign birds and creatures,
And Jews and Foreigners with foreign features.

" All sorts of people there were seen together,
All sorts of characters, all sorts of dresses;
The fool with fox's tail and peacock's feather,
Pilgrims, and penitents, and grave burgesses;
The country people with their coats of leather,
Vintners and victuallers with cans and messes;
Grooms, archers, varlets, falconers and yeomen,
Damsels and waiting-maids, and waiting-women.

" But the profane, indelicate amours,
The vulgar, unenlighten'd conversation
Of minstrels, menials, courtezans, and boors,
(Although appropriate to their meaner station)
Would certainly revolt a taste like yours;
Therefore I shall omit the calculation
Of all the curses, oaths, and cuts, and stabs,
Occasion'd by their dice, and drink, and drabs.

" We must take care in our poetic cruise,
And never hold a single tack too long;
Therefore my versatile, ingenious Muse,
Takes leave of this illiterate, low-bred throng,
Intending to present superior views,
Which to genteeler company belong,
And show the higher orders of society
Behaving with politeness and propriety.

" And certainly they say, for fine behaving
King Arthur's Court has never had its match;
True point of honour, without pride or braving,
Strict etiquette for ever on the watch:
Their manners were refined and perfect — saving
Some modern graces, which they could not catch,
As spitting through the teeth, and driving stages,
Accomplishments reserved for distant ages.

" They look'd a manly, generous generation;
Beards, shoulders, eyebrows, broad, and square, and thick,
Their accents firm and loud in conversation,
Their eyes and gestures eager, sharp, and quick,
Showed them prepared, on proper provocation,
To give the lie, pull noses, stab, and kick;
And for that very reason, it is said,
They were so very courteous and well-bred.

" The ladies look'd of an heroic race —
At first a general likeness struck your eye,
Tall figures, open features, oval face,
Large eyes, with ample eyebrows arch'd and high;

Their manners had an odd, peculiar grace,
Neither repulsive, affable, nor shy,
Majestical, reserved, and somewhat sullen;
Their dresses partly silk, and partly woollen."

The little snatches of critical *quizzing* introduced in Whistlecraft are perfect in their way. Take, for example, this good-humoured parody on one of the most magnificent passages in Wordsworth: —

"In castles and in courts Ambition dwells,
But not in castles or in courts alone;
She breathed a wish, throughout those sacred cells,
For bells of larger size, and louder tone;
Giants abominate the sound of bells,
And soon the fierce antipathy was shown,
The tinkling and the jingling, and the clangor,
Roused their irrational, gigantic anger.

"Unhappy mortals! ever blind to fate!
Unhappy Monks! you see no danger nigh;
Exulting in their sound, and size, and weight,
From morn till noon the merry peal you ply:
The belfry rocks, your bosoms are elate,
Your spirits with the ropes and pulleys fly;
Tired, but transported, panting, pulling, hauling,
Ramping and stamping, overjoy'd and bawling.

"Meanwhile the solemn mountains that surrounded
The silent valley where the convent lay,
With tintinnabular uproar were astounded,
When the first peal burst forth at break of day:
Feeling their granite ears severely wounded,
They scarce knew what to think, or what to say;
And (though large mountains commonly conceal
Their sentiments, dissembling what they feel,

"Yet) *Cader-Gibbrish from his cloudy throne*
To huge Loblommon gave an intimation
Of this strange rumour, with an awful tone,
Thund'ring his deep surprise and indignation;
The lesser hills, in language of their own,
Discuss'd the topic by reverberation;
Discoursing with their echoes all day long,
Their only conversation was, 'ding-dong.'"

Mr. Rose has a very elegant essay on Whistlecraft, in his "Thoughts and Recollections by One of the last Century," which thus concludes: —

"Beppo, which had a story, and which pointed but one way, met with signal and universal success; while 'The Monks and the Giants' have been little appreciated, by the majority of readers. Yet those who will only laugh upon a sufficient warrant, may, on analysing this bravura-poem, find legitimate matter for their mirth. The want of meaning cannot certainly be objected to it, with reason; for it contains a deep substratum of sense, and does not exhibit a character which has not, or might not, have its parallel in nature. I remember at the time this poem was published, (which was, when the French monarchy seemed endangered by the vacillating conduct of Louis XVIII., who, under the guidance of successive ministers, was trimming between the loyalists and the liberals, apparently thinking that civility and conciliation was a remedy for all evils,) a friend dared me to prove my assertion; and, by way of a text, referred me to the character of the crippled abbot, under whose direction,

'The convent was all going to the devil,
While he, poor creature, thought himself beloved
For saying handsome things, and being civil,
Wheeling about as he was pull'd and shoved.'

"The obvious application of this was made by me to Louis XVIII.; and if it was not the intention of the author to designate him in particular, the applicability of the passage to the then state of France, and her ruler, shows, at least, the intrinsic truth of the description. Take, in the same way, the character of Sir Tristram, and we shall find its elements, if not in one, in different living persons.

'Songs, music, languages, and many a lay
Asturian, or Armoric, Irish, Basque,
His ready memory seized and bore away;
And ever when the ladies chose to ask,
Sir Tristram was prepared to sing and play,
Not like a minstrel, earnest at his task,
But with a sportive, careless, easy style,
As if he seem'd to mock himself the while.

'His ready wit, and rambling education,
With the congenial influence of his stars,
Had taught him all the arts of conversation,
All games of skill, and stratagems of wars;
His birth, it seems, by Merlin's calculation,
Was under Venus, Mercury, and Mars:
His mind with all their attributes was mix'd,
And, like those planets, wand'ring and unfix'd.'

" Who can read this description, without recognising in it the portraits (flattering portraits, perhaps) of two military characters well known in society ? "

The reader will find a copious criticism on Whistlecraft, from the pen of Ugo Foscolo, in the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxi. — E.]

BEPPO.

I.

'Tis known, at least it should be, that throughout
All countries of the Catholic persuasion,
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes about,
The people take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, ere they grow devout,
However high their rank, or low their station,
With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masquing,
And other things which may be had for asking.

II.

The moment night with dusky mantle covers
The skies (and the more duskily the better),
The time less liked by husbands than by lovers
Begins, and prudery flings aside her fetter;
And gaiety on restless tiptoe hovers,
Giggling with all the gallants who beset her;
And there are songs and quavers, roaring, humming,
Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.

III.

And there are dresses splendid, but fantastical,
Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews,
And harlequins and clowns, with feats gymnastical,
Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and Hindoos;
All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,
All people, as their fancies hit, may choose,
But no one in these parts may quiz the clergy,—
Therefore take heed, ye Freethinkers! I charge ye.

IV.

You'd better walk about begirt with briars,
Instead of coat and smallclothes, than put on
A single stitch reflecting upon friars,
Although you swore it only was in fun;
They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the fires
Of Phlegethon with every mother's son,
Nor say one mass to cool the caldron's bubble
That boil'd your bones, unless you paid them double.

V.

But saving this, you may put on whate'er
You like by way of doublet, cape, or cloak,
Such as in Monmouth-street, or in Rag Fair,
Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;
And even in Italy such places are,
With prettier name in softer accents spoke,
For, bating Covent Garden, I can hit on
No place that's call'd "Piazza" in Great Britain.(1)

(1) [MS.—"For, bating Covent Garden, I can't hit on
A place," &c.]

VI.

This feast is named the Carnival,(1) which being
Interpreted, implies "farewell to flesh:"
So call'd, because the name and thing agreeing,
Through Lent they live on fish both salt and fresh.
But why they usher Lent with so much glee in,
Is more than I can tell, although I guess
'Tis as we take a glass with friends at parting,
In the stage-coach or packet, just at starting.

VII.

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,
And solid meats, and highly spiced ragouts,
To live for forty days on ill-dress'd fishes,
Because they have no sauces to their stews,

(1) ["The Carnival," says Mr. Rose, "though it is gayer or duller, according to the genius of the nations which celebrate it, is, in its general character, nearly the same all over the peninsula. The beginning is like any other season; towards the middle you begin to meet masques and mummers in sunshine: in the last fifteen days the plot thickens; and during *the three last* all is hurly-burly. But to paint these, which may be almost considered as a separate festival, I must avail myself of the words of Messrs. William and Thomas Whistlecraft, in whose 'Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work' I find the description ready made to my hand, observing that, besides the ordinary dramatis personæ,—

'Beggars and vagabonds, blind, lame, and sturdy,
Mirstrels and singers, with their various airs,
The pipe, the tabor, and the hurdy-gurdy,
Jugglers and mountebanks, with apes and bears,
Continue, from the first day to the third day,
An uproar like ten thousand Smithfield fairs.'

The shops are shut, all business is at a stand, and the drunken cries heard at night afford a clear proof of the pleasures to which these days of leisure are dedicated. These holidays may surely be reckoned amongst the secondary causes which contribute to the indolence of the Italian, since they reconcile this to his conscience, as being of religious institution. Now there is, perhaps, no offence which is so unproportionably punished by conscience as that of indolence. With the wicked man, it is an intermittent disease; with the idle man, it is a chronic one."—*Letters from the North of Italy* vol. ii. p. 171.]

A thing which causes many "poohs" and "pishes,"
And several oaths (which would not suit the Muse),
From travellers accustom'd from a boy
To eat their salmon, at the least, with soy;

VIII.

And therefore humbly I would recommend
"The curious in fish-sauce," before they cross
The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,
Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross
(Or if set out beforehand, these may send
By any means least liable to loss),
Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey,
Or, by the Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve ye;

IX.

That is to say, if your religion's Roman,
And you at Rome would do as Romans do,
According to the proverb,—although no man,
If foreign, is obliged to fast; and you,
If Protestant, or sickly, or a woman,
Would rather dine in sin on a ragout—
Dine and be d—d! I dont mean to be coarse,
But that's the penalty, to say no worse.

X.

Of all the places where the Carnival
Was most facetious in the days of yore,
For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
And masque, and mime, and mystery, and more

Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
Venice the bell from every city bore,—
And at the moment when I fix my story,
That sea-born city was in all her glory.

XI.

They've pretty faces yet, those same Venetians,
Black eyes, arch'd brows, and sweet expressions still;
Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,
In ancient arts by moderns mimick'd ill;
And like so many Venuses of Titian's
(The best's at Florence(1)—see it, if ye will,)
They look when leaning over the balcony,
Or stepp'd from out a picture by Giorgione,(2)

XII.

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;
And when you to Manfrini's palace go,(3)
That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;

(1) ["At Florence I remained but a day, having a hurry for Rome. However, I went to the two galleries, from which one returns drunk with beauty; but there are sculpture and painting, which, for the first time, gave me an idea of what people mean by their *cant*, about those two most artificial of the arts. What struck me most were, — the mistress of Raphael, a portrait; the mistress of Titian, a portrait; a Venus of Titian, in the Medici gallery — *the* Venus; Canova's Venus, also in the other gallery," &c. — *B. Letters*, 1817.]

(2) ["I know nothing of pictures myself, and care almost as little; but to me there are none like the Venetian — above all, Giorgione. I remember well his Judgment of Solomon, in the Mariscalchi gallery in Bologna. The real mother is beautiful, exquisitely beautiful." — *B. Letters*, 1820.]

(3) [The following is Lord Byron's account of his visit to this palace, in April, 1817. — "To-day, I have been over the Manfrini palace, famous for

It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,
And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'Tis but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life![1]

XIII.

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,
No, nor ideal beauty, that fine name,
But something better still, so very real,
That the sweet model must have been the same;
A thing that you would purchase, beg, or steal,
Wer't not impossible, besides a shame:
The face recalls some face, as 'twere with pain,
You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

---

its pictures. Amongst them, there is a portrait of Ariosto, by Titian, surpassing all my anticipation of the power of painting or human expression: it is the poetry of portrait, and the portrait of poetry. There was also one of some learned lady centuries old, whose name I forget, but whose features must always be remembered. I never saw greater beauty, or sweetness, or wisdom; — it is the kind of face to go mad for, because it cannot walk out of its frame. There is also a famous dead Christ and live Apostles, for which Bonaparte offered in vain five thousand louis; and of which, though it is a capo d' opera of Titian, as I am no connoisseur, I say little, and thought less, except of one figure in it. There are ten thousand others, and some very fine Giorgiones amongst them. There is an original Laura and Petrarch, very hideous both. Petrarch has not only the dress, but the features and air of an old woman; and Laura looks by no means like a young one, or a pretty one. What struck most in the general collection, was the extreme resemblance of the style of the female faces in the mass of pictures, so many centuries or generations old, to those you see and meet every day among the existing Italians. The Queen of Cyprus and Giorgione's wife, particularly the latter, are Venetians as it were of yesterday; the same eyes and expression, and, to my mind, there is none finer. You must recollect, however, that I know nothing of painting, and that I detest it, unless it reminds me of something I have seen, or think it possible to see."]

(1) [This appears to be an incorrect description of the picture; as, according to Vasari and others, Giorgione never was married, and died young. — E.]

XIV.

One of those forms which flit by us, when we
Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;
And, oh! the loveliness at times we see
In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree,
In many a nameless being we retrace,
Whose course and home we knew not, nor shall know,
Like the lost Pleiad ([1]) seen no more below.

XV.

I said that like a picture by Giorgione
Venetian women were, and so they *are*,
Particularly seen from a balcony,
(For beauty 's sometimes best set off afar)
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,
They peep from out the blind, or o'er the bar:
And truth to say, they 're mostly very pretty,
And rather like to show it, more 's the pity!

XVI.

For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs,
Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a letter,
Which flies on wings of light-heel'd Mercuries,
Who do such things because they know no better;
And then, God knows, what mischief may arise,
When love links two young people in one fetter,
Vile assignations, and adulterous beds,
Elopements, broken vows, and hearts, and heads.

(1) "Quæ septem dici sex tamen esse solent." — Ovid.

XVII.

Shakspeare described the sex in Desdemona
As very fair, but yet suspect in fame,(1)
And to this day from Venice to Verona
Such matters may be probably the same,
Except that since those times was never known a
Husband whom mere suspicion could inflame
To suffocate a wife no more than twenty,
Because she had a " cavalier servente."

XVIII.

Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)
Is of a fair complexion altogether,
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's
Which smothers women in a bed of feather,
But worthier of these much more jolly fellows,
When weary of the matrimonial tether
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,
But takes at once another, or another's.(2)

XIX.

Didst ever see a Gondola? For fear
You should not, I'll describe it you exactly:
'Tis a long cover'd boat that 's common here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly, but compactly,

(1) [" Look to 't:
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is — not to leave undone, but keep unknown." — *Othello.*]

(2) [" Jealousy is not the order of the day in Venice, and daggers are out of fashion, while duels on love matters are unknown — at least, with the husbands." — *B. Letters.*]

Row'd by two rowers, each call'd "Gondolier,"
It glides along the water looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapt in a canoe,
Where none can make out what you say or do.

XX.

And up and down the long canals they go,
And under the Rialto (1) shoot along,
By night and day, all paces, swift or slow,
And round the theatres, a sable throng,
They wait in their dusk livery of woe,—
But not to them do woful things belong,
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,
Like mourning coaches when the funeral's done.

XXI.

But to my story.—'Twas some years ago,
It may be thirty, forty, more or less,
The carnival was at its height, and so
Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;

(1) [An English abbreviation. Rialto is the name, not of the bridge, but of the island from which it is called; and the Venetians say, il ponte di Rialto, as we say Westminster Bridge. In that island is the Exchange; and I have often walked there as on classic ground. In the days of Antonio and Bassanio it was second to none. "I sotto portichi," says Sansovino, writing in 1580, "sono ogni giorni frequentati da i mercatanti Fiorentini, Genovesi, Milanesi, Spagnuoli, Turchi, e d'altre nationi diverse del mondo, i quali vi concorrono in tanta copia, che questa piazza è annoverata fra le prime dell' universo." It was there that the Christian held discourse with the Jew; and Shylock refers to it, when he says,

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto, you have rated me."

'Andiamo à Rialto'—'l' ora di Rialto'—were on every tongue; and continue so to the present day. — ROGERS.]

A certain lady went to see the show,
Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

XXII.

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years
Which certain people call a "*certain age*,"
Which yet the most uncertain age appears,
Because I never heard, nor could engage
A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or tears,
To name, define by speech, or write on page,
The period meant precisely by that word,—
Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

XXIII.

Laura was blooming still, had made the best
Of time, and time return'd the compliment,
And treated her genteelly, so that, dress'd,
She look'd extremely well where'er she went;
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent,
Indeed she shone all smiles, and seem'd to flatter
Mankind with her black eyes for looking at her.

XXIV.

She was a married woman; 'tis convenient,
Because in Christian countries 'tis a rule
To view their little slips with eyes more lenient;
Whereas if single ladies play the fool,

(Unless within the period intervenient
A well-timed wedding makes the scandal cool)
I don't know how they ever can get over it,
Except they manage never to discover it.

XXV.

Her husband sail'd upon the Adriatic,
And made some voyages, too, in other seas,
And when he lay in quarantine for pratique
(A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease),
His wife would mount, at times, her highest attic,
For thence she could discern the ship with ease:
He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,
His name Giuseppe, call'd more briefly, Beppo.

XXVI.

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,
Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure;
Though colour'd, as it were, within a tanyard,
He was a person both of sense and vigour —
A better seaman never yet did man yard:
And *she*, although her manners show'd no rigour,
Was deem'd a woman of the strictest principle,
So much as to be thought almost invincible.(1)

(1) ["The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges' time: a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover; those who have two, three, or more, are a little wild; but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connection, who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. There is no convincing a woman here, that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the fitness of things, in having an *amoroso*. The great sin seems to lie in concealing it, or having more than one; that is, unless such an extension of the prerogative is understood and approved of by the prior claimant." — *B. Letters*, 1817.]

XXVII.

But several years elapsed since they had met;
Some people thought the ship was lost, and some
That he had somehow blunder'd into debt,
And did not like the thought of steering home;
And there were several offer'd any bet,
Or that he would, or that he would not come,
For most men (till by losing render'd sager)
Will back their own opinions with a wager.

XXVIII.

'Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
And their presentiment was quite prophetic
That they should never more each other see,
(A sort of morbid feeling, half poetic,
Which I have known occur in two or three,)
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad knee,
He left this Adriatic Ariadne.

XXIX.

And Laura waited long, and wept a little,
And thought of wearing weeds, as well she might;
She almost lost all appetite for victual,
And could not sleep with ease alone at night;
She deem'd the window-frames and shutters brittle
Against a daring housebreaker or sprite,
And so she thought it prudent to connect her
With a vice-husband, *chiefly* to *protect her.*

XXX.

She chose, (and what is there they will not choose,
If only you will but oppose their choice?)
Till Beppo should return from his long cruise,
And bid once more her faithful heart rejoice,
A man some women like, and yet abuse —
A coxcomb was he by the public voice;
A Count of wealth, they said, as well as quality,
And in his pleasures of great liberality. ([1])

XXXI.

And then he was a Count, and then he knew
Music, and dancing, fiddling, French and Tuscan;
The last not easy, be it known to you,
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.
He was a critic upon operas, too,
And knew all niceties of the sock and buskin;
And no Venetian audience could endure a
Song, scene, or air, when he cried "seccatura!"

XXXII.

His "bravo" was decisive, for that sound
Hush'd "Academie" sigh'd in silent awe;
The fiddlers trembled as he look'd around,
For fear of some false note's detected flaw.
The "prima donna's" tuneful heart would bound,
Dreading the deep damnation of his "bah!"
Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto,
Wish'd him five fathom under the Rialto.

(1) [MS. — "A Count of wealth inferior to his quality,
Which somewhat limited his liberality."]

XXXIII.

He patronised the Improvisatori,
Nay, could himself extemporise some stanzas,
Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a story,
Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance as
Italians can be, though in this their glory [has;
Must surely yield the palm to that which France
In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,
And to his very valet seem'd a hero.

XXXIV.

Then he was faithful too, as well as amorous;
So that no sort of female could complain,
Although they're now and then a little clamorous,
He never put the pretty souls in pain;
His heart was one of those which most enamour us,
Wax to receive, and marble to retain.
He was a lover of the good old school,
Who still become more constant as they cool.

XXXV.

No wonder such accomplishments should turn
A female head, however sage and steady —
With scarce a hope that Beppo could return,
In law he was almost as good as dead, he
Nor sent, nor wrote, nor show'd the least concern,
And she had waited several years already;
And really if a man won't let us know
That he's alive, he's *dead*, or should be so.

XXXVI.

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman,
(Although, God knows, it is a grievous sin,)
'Tis, I may say, permitted to have *two* men;
I can't tell who first brought the custom in,
But "Cavalier Serventes" are quite common,
And no one notices nor cares a pin;
And we may call this (not to say the worst)
A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first.*

XXXVII.

The word was formerly a "Cicisbeo,"
But *that* is now grown vulgar and indecent;
The Spaniards call the person a "*Cortejo,*"(1)
For the same mode subsists in Spain, though recent;
In short it reaches from the Po to Teio,
And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea sent.
But Heaven preserve Old England from such courses!
Or what becomes of damage and divorces?

XXXVIII.

However, I still think, with all due deference
To the fair *single* part of the Creation,
That married ladies should preserve the preference
In *tête-à-tête* or general conversation —
And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other nation —
Because they know the world, and are at ease,
And being natural, naturally please.

(1) Cortejo is pronounced Corteho, with an aspirate, according to the Arabesque guttural. It means what there is as yet no precise name for in England, though the practice is as common as in any tramontane country whatever.

XXXIX.

'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy and awkward at first coming out,
So much alarm'd, that she is quite alarming,
All Giggle, Blush; half Pertness, and half Pout;
And glancing at *Mamma*, for fear there's harm in
What you, she, it, or they, may be about,
The Nursery still lisps out in all they utter —
Besides, they always smell of bread and butter.

XL.

But "Cavalier Servente" is the phrase
Used in politest circles to express
This supernumerary slave, who stays
Close to the lady as a part of dress,
Her word the only law which he obeys.
His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call,
And carries fan and tippet, gloves and shawl.

XLI.

With all its sinful doings, I must say,
That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the Sun shine every day,
And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree
Festoon'd, much like the back scene of a play,
Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the south of France.

XLII.

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,
Without being forced to bid my groom be sure
My cloak is round his middle strapp'd about,
Because the skies are not the most secure;
I know too that, if stopp'd upon my route,
Where the green alleys windingly allure,
Reeling with *grapes* red waggons choke the way,—
In England 'twould be dung, dust, or a dray.

XLIII.

I also like to dine on becaficas,
To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
But with all Heaven t'himself; that day will break as
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky caldron simmers.

XLIV.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

XLV.

I like the women too (forgive my folly),
From the rich peasant cheek of ruddy bronze, (1)
And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,
To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,
But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, (2) and sunny as her skies. (3)

XLVI.

Eve of the land which still is Paradise!
Italian beauty! didst thou not inspire
Raphael, (4) who died in thy embrace, and vies
With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,
In what he hath bequeath'd us?—in what guise,
Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,
Would *words* describe thy past and present glow,
While yet Canova can create below? (5)

(1) [MS.—"From the tall peasant with her ruddy bronze."]

(2) [MS.—"Like her own clime, all sun, and bloom, and skies."]

(3) [In these lines the author rises above the usual and appropriate pitch of his composition, and is betrayed into something too like enthusiasm and deep feeling for the light and fantastic strain of his poetry. Neither does the fit go off, for he rises quite into rapture in the succeeding stanza. This is, however, the only slip of the kind in the whole work—the only passage in which the author betrays the secret (which might, however, have been suspected) of his own genius, and his affinity to a higher order of poets than those to whom he has here been pleased to hold out a model."—JEFFREY.]

(4) For the received accounts of the cause of Raphael's death, see his lives.

(5) (In talking thus, the writer, more especially
Of women, would be understood to say,
He speaks as a spectator, not officially,
And always, reader, in a modest way;

XLVII.

"England! with all thy faults I love thee still,"
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;
I like the government (but that is not it);
I like the freedom of the press and quill;
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it);
I like a parliamentary debate,
Particularly when 'tis not too late;

XLVIII.

I like the taxes, when they're not too many;
I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear;
I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any;
Have no objection to a pot of beer;
I like the weather, when it is not rainy,
That is, I like two months of every year.
And so God save the Regent, Church, and King!
Which means that I like all and every thing.

XLIX.

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's debt,
Our little riots just to show we are free men,
Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,
Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
All these I can forgive, and those forget,
And greatly venerate our recent glories,
And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

Perhaps, too, in no very great degree shall he
Appear to have offended in this lay,
Since, as all know, without the sex, our sonnets
Would seem unfinish'd, like their untrimm'd bonnets.)
(Signed) PRINTER'S DEVIL.

L.

But to my tale of Laura,—for I find
Digression is a sin, that by degrees
Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
And, therefore, may the reader too displease—
The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
And caring little for the author's ease,
Insist on knowing what he means, a hard
And hapless situation for a bard.

LI.

Oh that I had the art of easy writing
What should be easy reading! could I scale
Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
Those pretty poems never known to fail,
How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale;
And sell you, mix'd with western sentimentalism,
Some samples of the finest Orientalism.

LII.

But I am but a nameless sort of person,
(A broken Dandy (1) lately on my travels)
And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,
And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;
I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
But verse is more in fashion—so here goes.

(1) ["The expressions '*blue-stocking*' and '*dandy*' may furnish matter for the learning of a commentator at some future period. At this moment, every English reader will understand them. Our present ephemeral dandy is akin to the maccaroni of my earlier days. The first of those expressions has become classical, by Mrs. Hannah More's poem of 'Bas-Bleu,' and the other by the use of it in one of Lord Byron's

LIII.

The Count and Laura made their new arrangement,
Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes do,
For half a dozen years without estrangement;
They had their little differences, too;
Those jealous whiffs, which never any change meant:
In such affairs there probably are few
Who have not had this pouting sort of squabble,
From sinners of high station to the rabble.

LIV.

But, on the whole, they were a happy pair,
As happy as unlawful love could make them;
The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,
Their chains so slight, 'twas not worth while to break them:
The world beheld them with indulgent air;
The pious only wish'd "the devil take them!"
He took them not; he very often waits,
And leaves old sinners to be young ones' baits.

LV.

But they were young: Oh! what without our youth
Would love be! What would youth be without love!
Youth lends it joy, and sweetness, vigour, truth,
Heart, soul, and all that seems as from above;
But, languishing with years, it grows uncouth—
One of few things experience don't improve,
Which is, perhaps, the reason why old fellows
Are always so preposterously jealous.

---

poems. Though now become familiar and trite, their day may not be long.

——'Cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula.'"
LORD GLENBERVIE, *Ricciardetto*, 1822.]

LVI.

It was the Carnival, as I have said
Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so
Laura the usual preparations made,
Which you do when your mind's made up to go
To-night to Mrs. Boehm's masquerade,
Spectator, or partaker in the show;
The only difference known between the cases
Is—*here*, we have six weeks of "varnish'd faces."

LVII.

Laura, when dress'd, was (as I sang before)
A pretty woman as was ever seen,
Fresh as the Angel o'er a new inn door,
Or frontispiece of a new Magazine,
With all the fashions which the last month wore,
Colour'd, and silver paper leaved between
That and the title-page, for fear the press
Should soil with parts of speech the parts of dress.

LVIII.

They went to the Ridotto;—'tis a hall
Where people dance, and sup, and dance again;
Its proper name, perhaps, were a masqued ball,
But that's of no importance to my strain;
'Tis (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall,
Excepting that it can't be spoilt by rain:
The company is "mix'd" (the phrase I quote is
As much as saying, they're below your notice);

LIX.

For a " mix'd company" implies that, save
Yourself and friends, and half a hundred more,
Whom you may bow to without looking grave,
The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore
Of public places, where they basely brave
The fashionable stare of twenty score
Of well-bred persons, call'd " *the World;*" but I,
Although I know them, really don't know why.

LX.

This is the case in England; at least was
During the dynasty of Dandies,(1) now
Perchance succeeded by some other class
Of imitated imitators:—how
Irreparably soon decline, alas!
The demagogues of fashion: all below
Is frail; how easily the world is lost
By love, or war, and now and then by frost!

LXI.

Crush'd was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
Who knock'd his army down with icy hammer,
Stopp'd by the *elements*, (2) like a whaler, or
A blundering novice in his new French grammar;

(1) [" I liked the Dandies: they were always very civil to me; though, in general, they disliked literary people, and persecuted and mystified Madame de Stael, Lewis, Horace Twiss, and the like. The truth is, that though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of Dandyism in my minority, and probably retained enough of *it* to conciliate the great ones, at four and twenty." — *B. Diary*, 1821.]

(2) [" When Brummell was obliged to retire to France, he knew no French, and having obtained a grammar for the purpose of study, our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress Brummell had made in French: he responded, 'that Brummell had been stopped, like Bonaparte in Russia, by the *elements*.' I have put this pun into Beppo, which is 'a

Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,
And as for Fortune—but I dare not d—n her,
Because, were I to ponder to infinity,
The more I should believe in her divinity. (1)

LXII.

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,
She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and marriage;
I cannot say that she's done much for me yet;
Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,
We 've not yet closed accounts, and we shall see yet
How much she 'll make amends for past miscarriage;
Meantime the goddess I 'll no more importune,
Unless to thank her when she's made my fortune.

LXIII.

To turn,—and to return;—the devil take it!
This story slips for ever through my fingers,
Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,
It needs must be—and so it rather lingers;
This form of verse began, I can't well break it,
But must keep time and tune like public singers;
But if I once get through my present measure,
I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

---

fair exchange and no robbery;' for Scrope made his fortune at several dinners (as he owned himself), by repeating occasionally, as his own, some of the buffooneries with which I had encountered him in the morning." — *B. Diary*, 1821.]

(1) ["Like Sylla, I have always believed that all things depend upon Fortune, and nothing upon ourselves. I am not aware of any one thought or action, worthy of being called good to myself or others, which is not to be attributed to the good goddess — Fortune!" — *MS. Diary*, 1821.]

LXIV.

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place
To which I mean to go myself to-morrow, (1)
Just to divert my thoughts a little space,
Because I'm rather hippish, and may borrow
Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face
May lurk beneath each mask; and as my sorrow
Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or find,
Something shall leave it half an hour behind.)

LXV.

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,
Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her lips;
To some she whispers, others speaks aloud;
To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,
Complains of warmth, and this complaint avow'd,
Her lover brings the lemonade, she sips;
She then surveys, condemns, but pities still
Her dearest friends for being dress'd so ill.

LXVI.

One has false curls, another too much paint,
A third—where did she buy that frightful turban?
A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to faint,
A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and suburban,
A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,
A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her bane,
And lo! an eighth appears,—"I'll see no more!"
For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a score.

(1) In the margin of the original MS. Lord Byron has written—"January 19th, 1818. To-morrow will be a Sunday, and full Ridotto."—E.]

LXVII.

Meantime, while she was thus at others gazing,
Others were levelling their looks at her;
She heard the men's half-whisper'd mode of praising,
And, till 'twas done, determined not to stir;
The women only thought it quite amazing
That, at her time of life, so many were
Admirers still,—but men are so debased,
Those brazen creatures always suit their taste.

LXVIII.

For my part, now, I ne'er could understand
Why naughty women—but I won't discuss
A thing which is a scandal to the land,
I only don't see why it should be thus;
And if I were but in a gown and band,
Just to entitle me to make a fuss,
I'd preach on this till Wilberforce and Romilly
Should quote in their next speeches from my homily.

LXIX.

While Laura thus was seen and seeing, smiling,
Talking, she knew not why and cared not what,
So that her female friends, with envy broiling,
Beheld her airs and triumph, and all that;
And well dress'd males still kept before her filing,
And passing bow'd and mingled with her chat;
More than the rest one person seem'd to stare
With pertinacity that's rather rare.

LXX.

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany;
And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,
Because the Turks so much admire philogyny,
Although their usage of their wives is sad;
'Tis said they use no better than a dog any
Poor woman, whom they purchase like a pad:
They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em,
Four wives by law, and concubines "ad libitum."

LXXI.

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,
They scarcely can behold their male relations,
So that their moments do not pass so gaily
As is supposed the case with northern nations;
Confinement, too, must make them look quite palely:
And as the Turks abhor long conversations,
Their days are either pass'd in doing nothing,
Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

LXXII.

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism;
Nor write, and so they don't affect the muse;
Were never caught in epigram or witticism,
Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews,—
In harams learning soon would make a pretty schism!
But luckily these beauties are no "Blues,"
No bustling Botherbys have they to show 'em
"That charming passage in the last new poem."

LXXIII.

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time,
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small " Triton of the minnows," the sublime
Of mediocrity, the furious tame,
The echo's echo, usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

LXXIV.

A stalking oracle of awful phrase, [law)
The approving " *Good!*" (by no means GOOD in
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

LXXV.

One hates an author that's *all author*, fellow
In foolscap uniforms turn'd up with ink,
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,
One don't know what to say to them, or think,
Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;
Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink
Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
These unquench'd snuffings of the midnight taper

LXXVI.

Of these same we see several, and of others,
Men of the world, who know the world like men,
Scott, Rogers, Moore, and all the better brothers,
Who think of something else besides the pen;
But for the children of the "mighty mother's,"
The would-be wits and can't-be gentlemen,
I leave them to their daily "tea is ready,"
Smug coterie, and literary lady.(1)

LXXVII.

The poor dear Mussulwomen whom I mention
Have none of these instructive pleasant people,
And *one* would seem to them a new invention,
Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple;
I think 'twould almost be worth while to pension
(Though best-sown projects very often reap ill)
A missionary author, just to preach
Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

LXXVIII.

No chemistry for them unfolds her gasses,
No metaphysics are let loose in lectures,
No circulating library amasses
Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures
Upon the living manners, as they pass us;
No exhibition glares with annual pictures;
They stare not on the stars from out their attics,
Nor deal (thank God for that!) in mathematics.

(1) [Nothing can be cleverer than this caustic little diatribe, introduced *à propos* of the life of Turkish ladies in their harams. — JEFFREY.]

LXXIX.

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,
I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,
I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose;
I fear I have a little turn for satire,
And yet methinks the older that one grows
Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though laughter
Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

LXXX.

Oh, Mirth and Innocence! Oh, Milk and Water!
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
Abominable Man no more allays
His thirst with such pure beverage. No matter,
I love you both, and both shall have my praise:
Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy! —
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

LXXXI.

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,
Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,
Which seems to say, "Madam, I do you honour,
"And while I please to stare, you'll please to stay:"
Could staring win a woman, this had won her,
But Laura could not thus be led astray;
She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle
Even at this stranger's most outlandish ogle.

LXXXII.

The morning now was on the point of breaking,
A turn of time at which I would advise
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking
In any other kind of exercise,
To make their preparations for forsaking
The ball-room ere the sun begins to rise,
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,
His blushes make them look a little pale.

LXXXIII.

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,
And stay'd them over for some silly reason,
And then I look'd (I hope it was no crime)
To see what lady best stood out the season;
And though I've seen some thousands in their prime,
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn),
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.

LXXXIV.

The name of this Aurora I'll not mention,
Although I might, for she was nought to me
More than that patent work of God's invention,
A charming woman, whom we like to see;
But writing names would merit reprehension,
Yet if you like to find out this fair *she*,
At the next London or Parisian ball
You still may mark her cheek, out-blooming all.

LXXXV.

Laura, who knew it would not do at all
To meet the daylight after seven hours sitting
Among three thousand people at a ball,
To make her curtsy thought it right and fitting;
The Count was at her elbow with her shawl,
And they the room were on the point of quitting,
When lo! those cursed gondoliers had got
Just in the very place where they *should not.*

LXXXVI.

In this they're like our coachmen, and the cause
Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling, hauling,
With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,
They make a never intermitting bawling.
At home, our Bow-street gemmen keep the laws,
And here a sentry stands within your calling;
But for all that, there is a deal of swearing,
And nauseous words past mentioning or bearing.

LXXXVII.

The Count and Laura found their boat at last,
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,
Discussing all the dances gone and past;
The dancers and their dresses, too, beside;
Some little scandals eke: but all aghast
(As to their palace stairs the rowers glide)
Sate Laura by the side of her Adorer, (1)
When lo! the Mussulman was there before her.

(1) [MS.—"Sate Laura with a kind of comic horror."]

LXXXVIII.

" Sir," said the Count, with brow exceeding grave,
" Your unexpected presence here will make
" It necessary for myself to crave
" Its import? But perhaps 'tis a mistake;
" I hope it is so; and at once to wave
" All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;
" You understand my meaning, or you *shall*."
" Sir," (quoth the Turk) " 'tis no mistake at all.

LXXXIX.

" That lady is *my wife!*" Much wonder paints
The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;
But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,
Italian females don't do so outright;
They only call a little on their saints,
And then come to themselves, almost or quite;
Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and sprinkling faces,
And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

XC.

She said,—what could she say? Why, not a word:
But the Count courteously invited in
The stranger, much appeased by what he heard:
" Such things, perhaps, we 'd best discuss within,"
Said he; " don't let us make ourselves absurd
" In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,
For then the chief and only satisfaction
Will be much quizzing on the whole transaction."

XCI.

They enter'd, and for coffee call'd—it came,
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,
Although the way they make it's not the same.
Now Laura, much recover'd, or less loth
To speak, cries "Beppo! what's your pagan name?
Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!
And how came you to keep away so long?
Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong?

XCII.

And are you *really, truly,* now a Turk?
With any other women did you wive?
Is't true they use their fingers for a fork?
Well, that's the prettiest shawl—as I'm alive!
You'll give it me? They say you eat no pork.
And how so many years did you contrive
To—Bless me! did I ever? No, I never
Saw a man grown so yellow! How's your liver?

XCIII.

Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you not;
It shall be shaved before you're a day older:
Why do you wear it? Oh! I had forgot—
Pray don't you think the weather here is colder?
How do I look? You shan't stir from this spot
In that queer dress, for fear that some beholder
Should find you out, and make the story known.
How short your hair is! Lord! how grey it's grown!"

XCIV.

What answer Beppo made to these demands
Is more than I know. He was cast away
About where Troy stood once, and nothing stands;
Became a slave of course, and for his pay
Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands
Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,
He join'd the rogues and prosper'd, and became
A renegado of indifferent fame.

XCV.

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so
Keen the desire to see his home again,
He thought himself in duty bound to do so,
And not be always thieving on the main;
Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,
And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,
Bound for Corfu: she was a fine polacca,
Mann'd with twelve hands, and laden with tobacco.

XCVI.

Himself, and much (heaven knows how gotten!) cash,
He then embark'd with risk of life and limb,
And got clear off, although the attempt was rash;
He said that *Providence* protected him —
For my part, I say nothing—lest we clash
In our opinions: — well, the ship was trim,
Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,
Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.

XCVII.

They reach'd the island, he transferr'd his lading,
And self and live stock, to another bottom,
And pass'd for a true Turkey-merchant, trading
With goods of various names, but I've forgot 'em.
However, he got off by this evading,
Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;
And thus at Venice (1) landed to reclaim
His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

XCVIII.

His wife received, the patriarch re-baptized him,
(He made the church a present, by the way);
He then threw off the garments which disguised him,
And borrow'd the Count's smallclothes for a day:
His friends the more for his long absence prized him,
Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,
With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them,
For stories—but *I* don't believe the half of them.

(1) ["You ask me," says Lord Byron, in a letter written in 1820, "for a volume of Manners, &c. on Italy. Perhaps I am in the case to know more of them than most Englishmen, because I have lived among the natives, and in parts of the country where Englishmen never resided before (I speak of Romagna and this place particularly); but there are many reasons why I do not choose to treat in print on such a subject. Their moral is not your moral; their life is not your life; you would not understand it: it is not English, nor French, nor German, which you would all understand. The conventual education, the cavalier servitude, the habits of thought and living, are so entirely different, and the difference becomes so much more striking the more you live intimately with them, that I know not how to make you comprehend a people who are at once temperate and profligate, serious in their characters and buffoons in their amusements, capable of impressions and passions, which are at once *sudden* and *durable* (what you find in no other nation), and who actually have no society (what we would call so), as you may see by their comedies; they have no real comedy, not even in Goldoni, and tha

XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffer'd, his old age
With wealth and talking make him some amends;
Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,
I've heard the Count and he were always friends.
My pen is at the bottom of a page,
Which being finish'd, here the story ends;
'Tis to be wish'd it had been sooner done,
But stories somehow lengthen when begun.(1)

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is because they have no society to draw it from. Their conversazioni are not society at all. They go to the theatre to talk, and into company to hold their tongues. The women sit in a circle, and the men gather into groups, or they play at dreary faro, or 'lotto reale,' for small sums. Their academie are concerts like our own, with better music and more form. Their best things are the carnival balls and masquerades, when every body runs mad for six weeks. After their dinners and suppers they make extempore verses and buffoon one another; but it is in a humour which you would not enter into, ye of the north. — "In their houses it is better. As for the women, from the fisherman's wife up to the nobil dama, their system has its rules, and its fitnesses, and its decorums, so as to be reduced to a kind of discipline or game at hearts, which admits few deviations, unless you wish to lose it. They are extremely tenacious, and jealous as furies, not permitting their lovers even to marry if they can help it, and keeping them always close to them in public as in private, whenever they can. In short, they transfer marriage to adultery, and strike the *not* out of that commandment. The reason is, that they marry for their parents, and love for themselves. They exact fidelity from a lover as a debt of honour, while they pay the husband as a tradesman, that is, not at all. You hear a person's character, male or female, canvassed not as depending on their conduct to their husbands or wives, but to their mistress or lover. If I wrote a quarto, I don't know that I could do more than amplify what I have here noted."]

(1) [This extremely clever and amusing performance affords a very curious and complete specimen of a kind of diction and composition of which our English literature has hitherto presented very few examples. It is, in itself, absolutely a thing of nothing — without story, characters, sentiments, or intelligible object; — a mere piece of lively and loquacious prattling, in short, upon all kinds of frivolous subjects, — a sort of gay and desultory babbling about Italy and England, Turks, balls, literature, and fish sauces. But still there is something very engaging in the uniform gaiety, politeness, and good humour of the author, and something still

more striking and admirable in the matchless facility with which he has cast into regular, and even difficult, versification the unmingled, unconstrained, and unselected language of the most light, familiar, and ordinary conversation. With great skill and felicity, he has furnished us with an example of about one hundred stanzas of good verse, entirely composed of common words, in their common places; never presenting us with one sprig of what is called poetical diction, or even making use of a single inversion, either to raise the style or assist the rhyme — but running on in an inexhaustible series of good easy colloquial phrases, and finding them fall into verse by some unaccountable and happy fatality. In this great and characteristic quality it is almost invariably excellent. In some other respects, it is more unequal. About one half is as good as possible, in the style to which it belongs; the other half bears, perhaps, too many marks of that haste with which such a work must necessarily be written. Some passages are rather too snappish, and some run too much on the cheap and rather plebeian humour of out-of-the-way rhymes, and strange-sounding words and epithets. But the greater part is extremely pleasant, amiable, and gentlemanlike. — JEFFREY.]

MAZEPPA.

[THE following "lively, spirited, and pleasant tale," as Mr. Gifford calls it, on the margin of the MS., was written in the autumn of 1818, at Ravenna. We extract the following from a reviewal of the time. — "MAZEPPA is a very fine and spirited sketch of a very noble story, and is every way worthy of its author. The story is a well-known one; namely, that of the young Pole, who, being bound naked on the back of a wild horse, on account of an intrigue with the lady of a certain great noble of his country, was carried by his steed into the heart of the Ukraine, and being there picked up by some Cossacks, in a state apparently of utter hopelessness and exhaustion, recovered, and lived to be long after the prince and leader of the nation among whom he had arrived in this extraordinary manner. Lord Byron has represented the strange and wild incidents of this adventure, as being related in a half serious, half sportive way, by Mazeppa himself, to no less a person than Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, in some of whose last campaigns, the Cossack Hetman took a distinguished part. He tells it during the desolate bivouack of Charles and the few friends who fled with him towards Turkey, after the bloody overthrow of Pultowa. There is not a little of beauty and gracefulness in this way of setting the picture; — the age of Mazeppa — the calm, practised indifference with which he now submits to the worst of fortune's deeds — the heroic, unthinking coldness of the royal madman to whom he speaks — the dreary and perilous accompaniments of the scene around the speaker and the audience, — all contribute to throw a very striking charm both of preparation and of contrast over the wild story of the Hetman. Nothing can be more beautiful, in like manner, than the account of the love — the guilty love — the fruits of which had been so miraculous." — E.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

" Celui qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Padolie: il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent: il resta longtems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—Voltaire, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 196.

" Le roi fuyant, et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille."—p. 216.

" Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrace, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés." — p. 218. (1)

(1) [For some authentic and interesting particulars concerning the Hetman MAZEPPA, see Mr. Barrow's delightful "*Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great.*" FAMILY LIBRARY, No. XXXV. — E.]

MAZEPPA.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard t' upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.

His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own — and died the Russians' slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —
The beacons of surrounding foes —
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In outworn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff — his limbs were stark —
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs! — alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.

Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade —
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obey'd his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around, — and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight, —
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood —

If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock —
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt —
And next the venerable man,
From out his havresack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offer'd then
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe; —
And then he said — "Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus and thou:
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
For pricking o'er flood and field."
Mazeppa answer'd — "Ill betide
The school wherein I learn'd to ride!"
Quoth Charles — "Old Hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?"
Mazeppa said — "'Twere long to tell;
And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,

And ten to one at least the foe,
Before our steeds may graze at ease,
Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop."—"But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
This tale of thine, and I may reap,
Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—
Ay, 'twas,—when Casimir was king—
John Casimir,—I was his page
Six summers, in my earlier age:
A learned monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your majesty:
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
Not that he had no cares to vex,
He loved the muses and the sex;
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress, or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
All Warsaw gather'd round his gates

To gaze upon his splendid court,
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port:
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter.
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And sign'd my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
There was a certain Palatine,
A count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt or silver mine; (1)
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from heaven he had been sent:
He had such wealth in blood and ore
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost look'd like want of head,
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of his opinion—
His junior she by thirty years—
Grew daily tired of his dominion;
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
To virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two, some glances
At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
Awaited but the usual chances,

(1) This comparison of a "*salt* mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Those happy accidents which render
The coldest dames so very tender,
To deck her Count with titles given,
'Tis said, as passports into heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these, who have deserved them most.

V.

" I was a goodly stripling then;
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree,
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
A port, not like to this ye see,
But smooth, as all is rugged now;
For time, and care, and war, have plough'd
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavow'd
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday;
This change was wrought, too, long ere age
Had ta'en my features for his page:
With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength, my courage, or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree,
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's form—
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
The memory is so quick and warm;

And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighbourhood,
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise of midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die. (1)
A brow like a midsummer lake,
Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
And heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
I loved her then—I love her still;
And such as I am, love indeed
In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age
With the vain shadow of the past,
As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

"We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd,
She did not speak, and yet replied;

(1) [MS.—"Until it proves a joy to die."]

There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines—
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept,
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion—then, even then,
I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again,
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour.—There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is—I have forgot the name—
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I reck'd not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.—
I watch'd her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,

That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Play'd on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot. (1)
Then through my brain the thought did pass
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
All incoherent as they were —
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listen'd — 'tis enough —
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again —
They tell me, Sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am — or rather *was* — a prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince

(1) [MS. — —— "but not
For that which we had both forgot."]

The like control—But to resume:
I loved, and was beloved again;
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing—all
Except that hour which doth recall
In the long lapse from youth to age
No other like itself—I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more—and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth
Save nature's gift of youth and health.—
We met in secret—doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that—I would have given
My life but to have call'd her mine
In the full view of earth and heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us;—the devil
On such occasions should be civil—
The devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,

But to his pious bile gave vent—
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth—
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do?—
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succour near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seem'd reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resigned me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate.—
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line;
Because unto himself he seem'd
The first of men, nor less he deem'd
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath! with a *page*—perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing;

But with a stripling of a page—
I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

"'Bring forth the horse!'—the horse was brought;
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who look'd as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled—
'Twas but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led:
They bound me on, that menial throng,
Upon his back with many a thong;
Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

"Away!—away!—My breath was gone—
I saw not where he hurried on:
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:

With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me—for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
They little thought that day of pain,
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,
That one day I should come again,
With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The Count for his uncourteous ride.
They play'd me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,

They bound me to his foaming flank:
At length I play'd them one as frank—
For time at last sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

"Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind;
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequer'd with the northern light:
Town—village—none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black;
And, save the scarce seen battlement
On distant heights of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod:—
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by—
I could have answer'd with a sigh—
But fast we fled, away, away—
And I could neither sigh nor pray;

And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane;
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career:
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slacken'd in his speed;
But no—my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became:
Each motion which I made to free
My swoln limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright:
I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low,
But yet he swerved as from a blow;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang:
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

"We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side;
'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste,—
But these were few, and far between
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strown by those autumnal eves

That nip the forest's foliage dead,
Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frost o'er every tombless head,
So cold and stark the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,

And perish — if it must be so —
At bay, destroying many a foe.
When first my courser's race begun,
I wish'd the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he past —
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
All furious as a favour'd child
Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still —
A woman piqued — who has her will.

XIII.

" The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold —
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er:
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path,
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in nature's nakedness;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,

And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther: he who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
  And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain;
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
  But a confusion worse than such:
  I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust:

No matter; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now. (1)

XIV.

" My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb: till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight return'd, though dim; alas!
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam too of the sky,
Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
And dashes off the ascending waves,

(1) [The reviewer already quoted says,—" As the Hetman proceeds, it strikes us there is a much closer resemblance to the fiery flow of Walter Scott's chivalrous narrative, than in any of Lord Byron's previous pieces. Nothing can be grander than the sweep and torrent of the horses' speed, and the slow, unwearied, inflexible pursuit of the wolves."]

And onward we advance!
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top: a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward, seems,
Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white,
Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right.
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
To make him merry with my woes:

That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

"Onward we went—but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour;
But useless all to me.
His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain:
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun—
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it roll'd away—
Before the eastern flame

Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And call'd the radiance from their cars, (1)
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

" Up rose the sun ; the mists were curl'd
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around—behind—before ;
What booted it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil ;
No sign of travel—none of toil ;
The very air was mute ;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still stagger'd on ;
And still we were—or seem'd—alone :
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh,
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs ?
No, no ! from out the forest prance
A trampling troop ; I see them come !
In one vast squadron they advance !
I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.

(1) [MS. — " Rose crimson, and forbad the stars
To sparkle in their radiant cars." — E.]

The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse—and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils—never stretch'd by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet;
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answer'd, and then fell;
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immoveable,
His first and last career is done!
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong:
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed,
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide;
They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,

And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct, from a human eye.—
They left me there to my despair,
Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,
From whence I could not extricate
Nor him nor me—and there we lay
The dying on the dead!
I little deem'd another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

"And there from morn till twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resign'd
To that which our foreboding years
Presents the worst and last of fears
Inevitable—even a boon,
Nor more unkind for coming soon;
Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
That prudence might escape:
At times both wish'd for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
And welcome in no shape.

And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revell'd beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
Whose heritage was misery:
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future, (which is view'd
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued,)
With nought perhaps to grieve:—
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

"The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,

I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed:
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun;
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
Together scared him off at length. —
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain —
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

"I woke — Where was I? — Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall;
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free:
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be,—
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast:
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
She smiled — and I essay'd to speak,
But fail'd — and she approach'd, and made
With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,

And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
  And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music follow'd her light feet;—
  But those she call'd were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she pass'd,
Another look on me she cast,
  Another sign she made, to say,
That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
  And she would not delay
Her due return:—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

"She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more?—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest
They found me senseless on the plain—
  They bore me to the nearest hut—
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!
  Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
  Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne,—
  What mortal his own doom may guess?—

Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank,—and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there. (1)
Comrades, good night!"—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour asleep. (2)

(1) ["Charles, having perceived that the day was lost, and that his only chance of safety was to retire with the utmost precipitation, suffered himself to be mounted on horseback, and with the remains of his army fled to a place called Perewolochna, situated in the angle formed by the junction of the Vorskla and the Borysthenes. Here, accompanied by Mazeppa, and a few hundreds of his followers, Charles swam over the latter great river, and proceeding over a desolate country, in danger of perishing with hunger, at length reached the Bog, where he was kindly received by the Turkish pacha. The Russian envoy at the Sublime Porte demanded that Mazeppa should be delivered up to Peter, but the old Hetman of the Cossacks escaped this fate by taking a disease which hastened his death." — BARROW's *Peter the Great*, pp. 196—203.]

(2) [The copy of Mazeppa sent to this country by Lord Byron, is in the handwriting of Theresa, Countess Guiccioli; and it is impossible not to suspect that the Poet had some circumstances of his own personal history in his mind, when he portrayed the fair Polish *Theresa*, her youthful lover, and the jealous rage of the old Count Palatine. — E.]

ODE ON VENICE.

[This Ode was transmitted from Venice, along with Mazeppa. — E.]

ODE ON VENICE.

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
  Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
  A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats

The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—
And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,

And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order—they must go [slaughter.
Even where their driver goads them, though to
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that Time
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,

Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,
Madden'd with centuries of draught, are loud,
And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd
The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—
Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight
With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations—fair, when free—
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
With Freedom—godlike Triad! how ye sate!
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate
All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes
Were of the softer order—born of Love,
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;

For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe,—
But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,

Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheaply earn'd with blood.—Still, still, for ever
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee!

THE

MORGANTE MAGGIORE

OF PULCI.

[THE following translation was executed at Ravenna, in February, 1820, and first saw the light in the pages of the unfortunate journal called "The Liberal." The merit of it, as Lord Byron over and over states in his letters, consists in the wonderful *verbum pro verbo* closeness of the version. It was, in fact, an exercise of skill in this art; and cannot be fairly estimated, without continuous reference to the original Italian, which the reader will now, for the first time, find placed opposite to the text. Those who want full information, and clear philosophical views, as to the origin of the Romantic Poetry of the Italians, will do well to read at length an article on that subject, from the pen of the late Ugo Foscolo, in the forty-second number of the Quarterly Review. We extract from it the passage in which that learned writer applies himself more particularly to the Morgante of Pulci. After showing that all the poets of this class adopted as the groundwork of their fictions, the old wild materials which had for ages formed the stock in trade of the professed story-tellers, — in those days a class of persons holding the same place in Christendom, and more especially in Italy, which their brothers still maintain all over the East, — Foscolo thus proceeds: —

"The customary forms of the narrative all find a place in romantic poetry: such are the sententious reflections suggested by the matters which he has just related, or arising in anticipation of those which he is about to relate, and which the story-teller always opens when he resumes his recitations; his defence of his own merits against the attacks of rivals in trade; and his formal leave-taking when he parts from his audience, and invites them to meet him again on the morrow. This method of winding up each portion of the poem is a favourite among the romantic poets; who constantly finish their cantos with a distich, of which the words may vary, but the sense is uniform.

'All' altro canto ve farò sentire,
Se all' altro canto mi verrete a udire.' — ARIOSTO.

Or at the end of another canto, according to Harrington's translation, —

'I now cut off abruptly here my rhyme,
And keep my tale unto another time.'

"The forms and materials of these popular stories were adopted by writers of a superior class, who considered the vulgar tales of their pre-

decessors as blocks of marble finely tinted and variegated by the hand of nature, but which might afford a master-piece, when tastefully worked and polished. The romantic poets treated the traditionary fictions just as Dante did the legends invented by the monks to maintain their mastery over weak minds. He formed them into a poem, which became the admiration of every age and nation: but Dante and Petrarca were poets, who, though universally celebrated, were not universally understood. The learned found employment in writing comments upon their poems; but the nation, without even excepting the higher ranks, knew them only by name. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, a few obscure authors began to write romances in prose and in rhyme, taking for their subject the wars of Charlemagne and Orlando, or sometimes the adventures of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. These works were so pleasing, that they were rapidly multiplied: but the bards of romance cared little about style or versification,—they sought for adventures, and enchantments, and miracles. We here obtain at least a partial explanation of the rapid decline of Italian poetry, and the amazing corruption of the Italian language, which took place immediately after the death of Petrarch, and which proceeded from bad to worse until the era of Lorenzo de' Medici.

It was then that Pulci composed his Morgante for the amusement of Madonna Lucrezia, the mother of Lorenzo; and he used to recite it at table to Ficino, and Politian, and Lorenzo, and the other illustrious characters who then flourished at Florence: yet Pulci adhered strictly to the original plan of the popular story-tellers; and if his successors have embellished them so that they can scarcely be recognised, it is certain that in no other poem can they be found so genuine and native as in the Morgante. Pulci accommodated himself, though sportively, to the genius of his age. classical taste and sound criticism began to prevail, and great endeavours were making by the learned to separate historical truth from the chaos of fable and tradition: so that, though Pulci introduced the most extravagant fables, he affected to complain of the errors of his predecessors. 'I grieve,' he said, 'for my Emperor Charlemagne: for I see that his history has been badly written and worse understood.'

> 'E del mio Carlo imperador m'increbbe;
> E' stata questa istoria, a quel ch'io veggio,
> Di Carlo, male intesa e scritta peggio.'

"And whilst he quotes the great historian Leonardo Aretino with respect, he professes to believe the authority of the holy Archbishop Turpin, who is also one of the heroes of the poem. In another passage, where he imitates the apologies of the story-tellers, he makes a neat allusion to the taste of his audience. 'I know,' he says, 'that I must proceed straight-forward, and not tell a single lie in the course of my tale. This is not a story of mere invention: and if I go one step out of the right road, one chastises, another criticises, a third scolds—they try to drive me mad—but in fact they are out of their senses.'

"Pulci's versification is remarkably fluent. Yet he is deficient in melody; his language is pure, and his expressions flow naturally; but

his phrases are abrupt and unconnected, and he frequently writes ungrammatically. His vigour degenerates into harshness; and his love of brevity prevents the developement of his poetical imagery. He bears all the marks of rude genius; he was capable of delicate pleasantry, yet his smiles are usually bitter and severe. His humour never arises from points, but from unexpected situations strongly contrasted. The Emperor Charlemagne sentences King Marsilius of Spain to be hanged for high treason; and Archbishop Turpin kindly offers his services on the occasion.

> 'E' disse: Io vo', Marsilio, che tu muoja
> Dove tu ordinasti il tradimento.
> Disse Turpino: Io voglio farc il boja.
> Carlo rispose: Ed io son ben contento
> Che sia trattato di questi due cani
> L'opera santa con le sante mani.'

"Here we have an emperor superintending the execution of a king, who is hanged in the presence of a vast multitude, all of whom are greatly edified at beholding an archbishop officiating in the character of a finisher of the law. Before this adventure took place, Caradoro had despatched an ambassador to the emperor, complaining of the shameful conduct of a wicked Paladin, who had seduced the princess his daughter. The orator does not present himself with modern diplomatic courtesy —

> 'Macon t'abbatta come traditore,
> O disleale e ingiusto imperadore!
> A Caradoro è stato scritto, O Carlo,
> O Carlo! O Carlo! (e crollava la testa)
> De la tua corte, che non puoi negarlo,
> De la sua figlia cosa disonesta.'

> "'O Charles,' he cried, 'Charles, Charles!' — and as he cried
> He shook his head — 'a sad complaint I bring
> Of shameful acts which cannot be denied:
> King Caradore has ascertain'd the thing,
> Which comes moreover proved and verified
> By letters from your own side of the water
> Respecting the behaviour of his daughter.'

"Such scenes may appear somewhat strange; but Caradoro's embassy, and the execution of King Marsilius, are told in strict conformity to the notions of the common people; and as they must still be described if we wished to imitate the popular story-tellers. If Pulci be occasionally refined and delicate, his snatches of amenity resulted from the national character of the Florentines, and the revival of letters. But at the same time, we must trace to national character, and to the influence of his daily companions, the buffoonery which, in the opinion of foreigners, frequently disgraces the poem. M. Ginguené has criticised Pulci in the usual style of his countrymen. He attributes modern manners to ancient times, and takes it for granted that the individuals of every other nation think and

act like modern Frenchmen. On these principles, he concludes that Pulci, both with respect to his subject and to his mode of treating it, intended only to write burlesque poetry; because, as he says, such buffoonery could not have been introduced into a composition recited to Lorenzo de' Medici and his enlightened guests, if the author had intended to be in earnest. In the fine portrait of Lorenzo given by Machiavelli at the end of his Florentine history, the historian complains that he took more pleasure in the company of jesters and buffoons than beseemed such a man. It is a little singular that Benedetto Varchi, a contemporary historian, makes the same complaint of Machiavelli himself. Indeed, many known anecdotes of Machiavelli, no less than his fugitive pieces, prove that it was only when he was acting the stateman that he wished to be grave; and that he could laugh like other men when he laid aside his dignity. We do not think he was in the wrong. But, whatever opinion may be formed on the subject, we shall yet be forced to conclude that great men may be compelled to blame the manners of their times, without being able to withstand their influence. In other respects, the poem of Pulci is serious, both in subject and in tone. And here we shall repeat a general observation, which we advise our readers to apply to all the romantic poems of the Italians—*That their comic humour arises from the contrast between the constant endeavours of the writers to adhere to the forms and subjects of the popular story-tellers, and the efforts made at the same time by the genius of these writers to render such materials interesting and sublime.*

"This simple elucidation of the causes of the poetical character of the Morgante has been overlooked by the critics; and they have therefore disputed with great earnestness during the last two centuries, whether the Morgante is written in jest or earnest; and whether Pulci is not an atheist, who wrote in verse for the express purpose of scoffing at all religion. Mr. Merivale inclines, in his Orlando in Roncesvalles, to the opinion of M. Ginguené, that the Morgante is decidedly to be considered as a burlesque poem, and a satire against the Christian religion. Yet Mr. Merivale himself acknowledges that it is wound up with a tragical effect, and dignified by religious sentiment; and is therefore forced to 'leave the question amongst the unexplained, and perhaps inexplicable phenomena of the human mind.' If a similar question had not been already decided, both in regard to Shakspeare and to Ariosto, it might be still a subject of dispute whether the former intended to write tragedies, and whether the other did not mean to burlesque his heroes. It is a happy thing that, with regard to those two great writers, the war has ended by the fortunate intervention of the general body of readers, who on such occasions, form their judgment with less erudition and with less prejudice than the critics. But Pulci is little read, and his age is little known. We are told by Mr. Merivale, that 'the points of abstruse theology are discussed in the Morgante with a degree of sceptical freedom which we should imagine to be altogether remote from the spirit of the fifteenth century.' Mr. Merivale follows M. Ginguené, who follows Voltaire. And the philosopher of Ferney, who was always beating up in all quarters for allies against Christianity, collected all the scriptural passages of Pulci, upon which he commented in his own way. But it is only since the Council of

Trent, that any doubt which might be raised on a religious dogma exposed an author to the charge of impiety; whilst, in the fifteenth century, a Catholic might be sincerely devout, and yet allow himself a certain degree of latitude in theological doubt. At one and the same time the Florentines might well believe in the Gospel and laugh at a doctor of divinity: for it was exactly at this era that they had been spectators of the memorable controversies between the representatives of the eastern and western churches. Greek and Latin bishops from every corner of Christendom had assembled at Florence for the purpose of trying whether they could possibly understand each other; and when they separated, they hated each other worse than before. At the very time when Pulci was composing his Morgante, the clergy of Florence protested against the excommunications pronounced by Sixtus IV., and with expressions by which his holiness was anathematised in his turn. During these proceedings, an archbishop, convicted of being a papal emissary, was hanged from one of the windows of the government palace at Florence: this event may have suggested to Pulci the idea of converting another archbishop into a hangman. The romantic poets substituted literary and scientific observations for the trivial digressions of the story-tellers. This was a great improvement: and although it was not well managed by Pulci, yet he presents us with much curious incidental matter. In quoting his philosophical friend and contemporary Matteo Palmieri, he explains the instinct of brutes by a bold hypothesis — he supposes that they are animated by evil spirits. This idea gave no offence to the theologians of the fifteenth century; but it excited much orthodox indignation when Father Bougeant, a French monk, brought it forward as a new theory of his own. Mr. Merivale, after observing that Pulci died before the discovery of America by Columbus, quotes a passage 'which will become a very interesting document for the philosophical historian.' We give it in his prose translation: — 'The water is level through its whole extent, although, like the earth, it has the form of a globe. Mankind in those ages were much more ignorant than now. Hercules would blush at this day for having fixed his columns. Vessels will soon pass far beyond them. They may soon reach another hemisphere, because every thing tends to its centre; in like manner, as by a divine mystery, the earth is suspended in the midst of the stars; here below are cities and empires, which were ancient. The inhabitants of those regions were called Antipodes. They have plants and animals as well as you, and wage wars as well as you.' — *Morgante*, c. xxv. st. 229, &c.

"The more we consider the traces of ancient science, which break in transient flashes through the darkness of the middle ages, and which gradually re-illuminated the horizon, the more shall we be disposed to adopt the hypothesis suggested by Bailly, and supported by him with seductive eloquence. He maintained that all the acquirements of the Greeks and Romans had been transmitted to them as the wrecks and fragments of the knowledge once possessed by primæval nations, by empires of sages and philosophers, who were afterwards swept from the face of the globe by some overwhelming catastrophe. His theory may be considered as extravagant; but if the literary productions of the Romans were not yet extant, it would seem incredible, that, after the lapse of a few centuries,

the civilisation of the Augustan age could have been succeeded in Italy by such barbarity. The Italians were so ignorant, that they forgot their family names; and before the eleventh century individuals were known only by their Christian names. They had an indistinct idea, in the middle ages, of the existence of the antipodes; but it was a reminiscence of ancient knowledge. Dante has indicated the number and position of the stars composing the polar constellation of the Austral hemisphere. At the same time he tells us, that when Lucifer was hurled from the celestial regions, the arch-devil transfixed the globe; half his body remained on our side of the centre of the earth, and half on the other side. The shock given to the earth by his fall drove a great portion of the waters of the ocean to the southern hemisphere, and only one high mountain remained uncovered, upon which Dante places his purgatory. As the fall of Lucifer happened before the creation of Adam, it is evident that Dante did not admit that the southern hemisphere had ever been inhabited; but, about thirty years afterwards, Petrarch, who was better versed in the ancient writers, ventured to hint that the sun shone upon mortals who were unknown to us.

'Nella stagion che il ciel rapido inchina
Vers' occidente, e che il dì nostro vola,
A gente che di là forse l' aspetta.'

"In the course of half a century after Petrarch, another step was gained. The existence of the antipodes was fully demonstrated. Pulci raises a devil to announce the fact; but it had been taught to him by his fellow-citizen Paolo Toscanelli, an excellent astronomer and mathematician, who wrote in his old age to Christopher Columbus, exhorting him to undertake his expedition. "A few stanzas have been translated by Mr. Merivale, with some slight variations, which do not wrong the original. They may be considered as a specimen of Pulci's poetry, when he writes with imagination and feeling. Orlando bids farewell to his dying horse.

'His faithful steed, that long had served him well
In peace and war, now closed his languid eye,
Kneel'd at his feet, and seem'd to say "Farewell!
I've brought thee to the destined port, and die."
Orlando felt anew his sorrows swell
When he beheld his Brigliadoro lie
Stretch'd on the field, that crystal fount beside,
Stiffen'd his limbs, and cold his warlike pride:
And, "O my much-loved steed, my generous friend,
Companion of my better years!" he said;
"And have I lived to see so sad an end
Of all thy toils, and thy brave spirit fled?
O pardon me, if e'er I did offend
With hasty wrong that mild and faithful head!"—
Just then, his eyes a momentary light
Flash'd quick;—then closed again in endless night.'

" When Orlando is expiring on the field of battle, an angel descends to him, and promises that Alda his wife shall join him in paradise.

> ' Bright with eternal youth and fadeless bloom,
> Thine Aldabella thou shalt behold once more,
> Partaker of a bliss beyond the tomb
> With her whom Sinai's holy hills adore,
> Crown'd with fresh flowers, whose colour and perfume
> Surpass what Spring's rich bosom ever bore —
> Thy mourning widow here she will remain,
> And be in Heaven thy joyful spouse again.'

" Whilst the soul of Orlando was soaring to heaven, a soft and plaintive strain was heard, and angelic voices joined in celestial harmony. They sang the psalm, ' When Israel went out of Egypt;' and the singers were known to be angels from the trembling of their wings.

> ' Poi sì sentì con un suon dolce e fioco
> Certa armonia con sì soavi accenti
> Che ben parea d' angelici stromenti.
> * * * * * *
> ' *In exitu Israel*, cantar, de *Ægypto*,
> Sentito fu dagli angeli solenne
> Che si conobbe al tremolar le penne.'

" Dante has inserted passages from the Vulgate in his Divina Commedia; and Petrarch, the most religious of poets, quotes Scripture even when he is courting. Yet they were not accused of impiety. Neither did Pulci incur the danger of a posthumous excommunication until after the Reformation, when Pius V. (a Dominican, who was turned into a saint by a subsequent pope) promoted the welfare of holy mother church by burning a few wicked books, and hanging a few troublesome authors. The notion that Pulci was in the odour of heresy influenced the opinion of Milton, who only speaks of the Morgante as a ' sportful romance.' Milton was anxious to prove that Catholic writers had ridiculed popish divines, and that the Bible had been subjected to private judgment, notwithstanding the popes had prohibited the reading of it. His ardour did not allow him to stop and examine whether this prohibition might not be posterior to the death of Pulci. Milton had studied Pulci to advantage. The knowledge which he ascribes to his devils, their despairing repentance, the lofty sentiments which he bestows upon some of them, and, above all, the principle that, notwithstanding their crime and its punishment, they retain the grandeur and perfection of angelic nature, are all to be found in the Morgante as well as in Paradise Lost. Ariosto and Tasso have imitated other passages. When great poets borrow from their inferiors in genius, they turn their acquisitions to such advantage that it is difficult to detect their thefts, and still more difficult to blame them.

" The poem is filled with kings, knights, giants, and devils. There are many battles and many duels. Wars rise out of wars, and empires are conquered in a day. Pulci treats us with plenty of magic and enchantment. His love adventures are not peculiarly interesting; and, with the exception of four or five leading personages, his characters are of no moment. The

fable turns wholly upon the hatred which Ganellon, the felon knight of Maganza, bears towards Orlando and the rest of the Christian Paladins. Charlemagne is easily practised upon by Ganellon, his prime confidant and man of business. So he treats Orlando and his friends in the most scurvy manner imaginable, and sends them out to hard service in the wars against France. Ganellon is despatched to Spain to treat with King Marsilius, being also instructed to obtain the cession of a kingdom for Orlando; but he concerts a treacherous device with the Spaniards, and Orlando is killed at the battle of Roncesvalles. The intrigues of Ganellon, his spite, his patience, his obstinacy, his dissimulation, his affected humility, and his inexhaustible powers of intrigue, are admirably depicted: and his character constitutes the chief and finest feature in the poem. Charlemagne is a worthy monarch, but easily gulled. Orlando is a real hero, chaste and disinterested, and who fights in good earnest for the propagation of the faith. He baptizes the giant Morgante, who afterwards serves him like a faithful squire. There is another giant, whose name is Margutte. Morgante falls in with Margutte; and they become sworn brothers. Margutte is a very infidel giant, ready to confess his failings, and full of drollery. He sets all a-laughing, readers, giants, devils, and heroes; and he finishes his career by laughing till he bursts."

The reader is referred to Vol. IV. p. 283. 287. *antè*, for Lord Byron's letters written when he was engaged on his version of the Morgante. Great part of them is occupied with anxious endeavours to ascertain whether *usbergo* means a *helmet* or a *cuirass;* a point on which the slightest knowledge of German would have been sufficient to make him easy. *Usbergo* is only another form of our own *hauberk*, and both are manifest corruptions of the German *halsberg*, i. e. *covering of the neck*. — E.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto. The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one; and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age

and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild, — or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganellone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, &c. as it suits his convenience; so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight

knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England which have been already mentioned.

IL

MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO PRIMO.

I.

In principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio;
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e'l Verbo lui:
Questo era nel principio, al parer mio;
E nulla si può far sanza costui:
Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria
Una famosa antica e degna storia.

II.

E tu Vergine, figlia, e madre, e sposa
Di quel Signor, che ti dette le chiave
Del cielo e dell' abisso, e d'ogni cosa,
Quel dì che Gabriel tuo ti disse Ave!
Perchè tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,
Con dolce rime, e stil grato e soave,
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,
E'nfino al fine allumina la mente.

THE

MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

In the beginning was the Word next God;
God was the Word, the Word no less was he:
This was in the beginning, to my mode
Of thinking, and without him nought could be:
Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
One only, to be my companion, who
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,
The day thy Gabriel said "All hail!" to thee,
Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,
Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III.

Era nel tempo, quando Filomena
Con la sorella si lamenta e plora,
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,
E pe' boschetti le ninfe innamora,
E Febo il carro temperato mena,
Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora;
Ed appariva appunto all'orizzonte,
Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte.

IV.

Quand'io varai la mia barchetta, prima
Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe
La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,
E del mio Carlo Imperador m'increbbe;
Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,
Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe:
E stata quella istoria, a quel ch' i' veggio,
Di Carlo male intesa, e scritta peggio.

V.

Diceva già Lionardo Aretino,
Che s'egli avesse avuto scrittor degno,
Com'egli ebbe un Ormanno il suo Pipino
Ch'avesse diligenzia avuto e ingegno;
Sarebbe Carlo Magno un uom divino;
Però ch'egli ebbe gran vittorie e regno,
E fece per la chiesa e per la fede
Certo assai più, che non si dice o crede.

III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and
Deplores the ancient woes which both befel,
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand
Of Phaeton by Phœbus loved so well
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now
Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratch'd his brow:

IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find
By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,
For all that I can see in prose or verse,
Have understood Charles badly, and wrote worse.

V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,
And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,
Certes, far more than yet is said or thought.

VI.

Guardisi ancora a san Liberatore
Quella badía là presso a Manoppello,
Giù ne gli Abbruzzi fatta per suo onore,
Dove fu la battaglia e'l gran flaggello
D'un re pagan, che Carlo imperadore
Uccise, e tanto del suo popol fello:
E vedesi tante ossa, e tanto il sanno,
Che tutte in Giusaffà poi si vedranno.

VII.

Ma il mondo cieco e ignorante non prezza
Le sue virtù, com'io vorrei vedere:
E tu, Fiorenza, de la sua grandezza
Possiedi, e sempre potrai possedere
Ogni costume ed ogni gentilezza
Che si potesse aquistare o avere
Col senno col tesoro o con la lancia
Dal nobil sangue e venuto di Francia.

VIII.

Dodici paladini aveva in corte
Carlo; e'l più savio e famoso era Orlando:
Gran traditor lo condusse a la morte
In Roncisvalle un trattato ordinando;
Là dove il corno sonò tanto forte
Dopo la dolorosa rotta, quando
Ne la sua commedia Dante qui dice,
E mettelo con Carlo in ciel felice.

VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore
The abbey, no great way from Manopell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,
Because of the great battle in which fell
A pagan king, according to the story,
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell:
And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if any.

VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,
All proper customs and true courtesies:
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

VIII.

Twelve paladins had Charles in court, of whom
The wisest and most famous was Orlando;
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb
In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,
While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do;
And Dante in his comedy has given
To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

IX.

Era per Pasqua quella dì natale:
Carlo la corte avea tutta in Parigi:
Orlando, com'io dico, il principale
Evvi, il Danese, Astolfo, e Ansuigi:
Fannosi feste e cose trionfale,
E molto celebravan San Dionigi;
Angiolin di Bajona, ed Ulivieri
V'era venuto, e'l gentil Berlinghieri.

X.

Eravi Avolio ed Avino ed Ottone,
Di Normandía, Riccardo Paladino,
E'l savio Namo, e'l vecchio Salamone,
Gualtier da Monlione, e Baldovino
Ch'era figliuol del tristo Ganellone.
Troppo lieto era il figliuol di Pipino;
Tanto che spesso d'allegrezza geme
Veggendo tutti i paladini insieme.

XI.

Ma la fortuna attenta sta nascosa,
Per guastar sempre ciascun nostro effetto;
Mentre che Carlo così si riposa,
Orlando governava in fatto e in detto
La corte e Carlo Magno ed ogni cosa:
Gan per invidia scoppia il maladetto,
E cominciava un dì con Carlo a dire:
Abbiam noi sempre Orlando ad ubbidire?

IX.

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his court
Charles held; the chief, I say, Orlando was,
The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass
In festival and in triumphal sport,
The much-renown'd St. Dennis being the cause;
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,
And gentle Belinghieri too came there:

X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salemone,
Walter of Lion's Mount and Baldovin,
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
Were there, exciting too much gladness in
The son of Pepin:—when his knights came hither,
He groan'd with joy to see them altogether.

XI.

But watchful Fortune, lurking, takes good heed
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing;
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king
One day he openly began to say,
"Orlando must we always then obey?

XII.

Io ho creduto mille volte dirti:
Orlando ha in se troppa presunzione:
Noi siam qui conti, re, duchi a servirti,
E Namo, Ottone, Uggieri e Salamone,
Per onorarti ognun, per ubbidirti:
Che costui abbi ogni reputazione
Nol sofferrem; ma siam deliberati
Da un fanciullo non esser governati.

XIII.

Tu cominciasti insino in Aspramonte
A dargli a intender che fusse gagliardo,
E facesse gran cose a quella fonte;
Ma se non fusse stato il buon Gherardo,
Io so che la vittoria era d'Almonte:
Ma egli ebbe sempre l'occhio a lo stendardo:
Che si voleva quel dì coronarlo:
Questo è colui ch'ha meritato, Carlo.

XIV.

Se ti ricorda già sendo in Guascogna,
Quando e' vi venne la gente di Spagna,
Il popol de' cristiani avea vergogna,
Se non mostrava la sua forza magna.
Il ver convien pur dir, quando e'bisogna:
Sappi ch'ognuno imperador si lagna:
Quant'io per me, ripasserò que' monti
Ch'io passai 'n qua con sessantaduo conti.

XII.

" A thousand times I've been about to say,
Orlando too presumptuously goes on;
Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,
Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,
Each have to honour thee and to obey;
But he has too much credit near the throne,
Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided
By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII.

" And even at Aspramont thou didst begin
To let him know he was a gallant knight,
And by the fount did much the day to win;
But I know *who* that day had won the fight
If it had not for good Gherardo been:
The victory was Almonte's else; his sight
He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

XIV.

" If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
When there advanced the nations out of Spain,
The Christian cause had suffer'd shamefully,
Had not his valour driven them back again.
Best speak the truth when there's a reason why:
Know then, oh emperor! that all complain:
As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
O'er which I cross'd with two and sixty counts.

XV.

La tua grandezza dispensar si vuole,
E far che ciascun abbi la sua parte:
La corte tutta quanta se ne duole:
Tu credi che costui sia forse Marte?
Orlando un giorno udì queste parole,
Che si sedeva soletto in disparte:
Dispiacquegli di Gan quel che diceva;
Ma molto più che Carlo gli credeva.

XVI.

E volle con la spada uccider Gano;
Ma Ulivieri in quel mezzo si mise,
E Durlindana gli trasse di mano,
E così il me' che seppe gli divise.
Orlando si sdegnò con Carlo Mano,
E poco men che quivi non l'uccise;
E dipartissi di Parigi solo,
E scoppia e'mpazza di sdegno e di duolo.

XVII.

Ad Ermellina moglie del Danese
Tolse Cortana, e poi tolse Rondello;
E 'n verso Brara il suo cammin poi prese.
Alda la bella, come vide quello,
Per abbracciarlo le braccia distese.
Orlando, che ismarrito avea il cervello,
Com'ella disse: ben venga il mio Orlando:
Gli volle in su la testa dar col brando.

XV.

" 'Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,
So that each here may have his proper part,
For the whole court is more or less in grief:
Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in heart?"
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder'd Gan,
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,
And thus at length they separated were.
Orlando angry too with Carloman,
Wanted but little to have slain him there;
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,
And burst and madden'd with disdain and grief.

XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,
And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the plain;
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again:
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
As " Welcome, my Orlando, home," she said,
Raised up his sword to smite her on the head.

XVIII.

Come colui che la furia consiglia,
Egli pareva a Gan dar veramente:
Alda la bella si fe' maraviglia:
Orlando si ravvide prestamente:
E la sua sposa pigliava la briglia,
E scese dal caval subitamente:
Ed ogni cosa narrava a costei,
E riposossi alcun giorno con lei.

XIX.

Poi si partì portato dal furore,
E terminò passare in Paganía;
E mentre che cavalca, il traditore
Di Gan sempre ricorda per la via:
E cavalcando d'uno in altro errore,
In un deserto truova una badía
In luoghi oscuri e paesi lontani,
Ch'era a' confin' tra cristiani e pagani.

XX.

L'abate si chiamava Chiaramonte,
Era del sangue disceso d'Anglante:
Di sopra a la badía v'era un gran monte,
Dove abitava alcun fiero gigante,
De'quali uno avea nome Passamonte,
L'altro Alabastro, e'l terzo era Morgante:
Con certe frombe gittavan da alto,
Ed ogni dì facevan qualche assalto.

XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels; his revenge
On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to take,
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange;
But soon Orlando found himself awake;
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,
And then reposed himself some days with her.

XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
And far as pagan countries roam'd astray,
And while he rode, yet still at every pace
The traitor Gan remember'd by the way;
And wandering on in error a long space,
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,
Which form'd the Christian's and the pagan's bound.

XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood
Descended from Angrante: under cover
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,
But certain savage giants look'd him over;
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,
And Alabaster and Morgante hover
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw
In daily jeopardy the place below.

XXI.

I monachetti non potieno uscire
Del monistero o per legne o per acque:
Orlando picchia, e non volieno aprire,
Fin che a l'abate a la fine pur piacque;
Entrato drento cominciava a dire,
Come colui, che di Maria già nacque
Adora, ed era cristian battezzato,
E com' egli era a la badía arrivato.

XXII.

Disse l'abate: il ben venuto sia:
Di quel ch'io ho volentier ti daremo,
Poi che tu credi al figliuol di Maria;
E la cagion, cavalier, ti diremo,
Acciò che non l'imputi a villania,
Perchè a l'entrar resistenza facemo,
E non ti volle aprir quel monachetto:
Così intervien chi vive con sospetto.

XXIII.

Quando ci venni al principio abitare
Queste montagne, benchè sieno oscure
Come tu vedi; pur si potea stare
Sanza sospetto, ch' ell' eran sicure:
Sol da le fiere t'avevi a guardare;
Fernoci spesso di brutte paure;
Or ci bisogna, se vogliamo starci,
Da le bestie dimestiche guardarci.

XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood;
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, before
Unto the prior it at length seem'd good;
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,
And was baptized a Christian; and then show'd
How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII.

Said the abbot, "You are welcome; what is mine
We give you freely, since that you believe
With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;
And that you may not, cavalier, conceive
The cause of our delay to let you in
To be rusticity, you shall receive
The reason why our gate was barr'd to you:
Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII.

"When hither to inhabit first we came
These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,
As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
They seem'd to promise an asylum sure:
From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,
'Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must guard
Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

XXIV.

Queste ci fan piuttosto stare a segno
Sonci appariti tre fieri giganti,
Non so di quel paese o di qual regno,
Ma molto son feroci tutti quanti:
La forza e 'l malvoler giunt'a lo'ngegno
Sai che può 'l tutto; e noi non siam bastanti;
Questi perturban sì l'orazion nostra,
Che non so più che far, s'altri nol mostra.

XXV.

Gli antichi padri nostri nel deserto,
Se le lor opre sante erano e giuste,
Del ben servir da Dio n'avean buon merto;
Nè creder sol vivessin di locuste:
Piovea dal ciel la manna, questo è certo;
Ma qui convien che spesso assaggi e guste
Sassi che piovon di sopra quel monte,
Che gettano Alabastro e Passamonte.

XXVI.

E 'l terzo ch'è Morgante, assai più fiero,
Isveglie e pini e faggi e cerri e gli oppi,
E gettagli infin qui: questo è pur vero;
Non posso far che d'ira non iscoppi.
Mentre che parlan così in cimitero,
Un sasso par che Rondel quasi sgroppi;
Che da' giganti giù venne da alto
Tanto, ch'e' prese sotto il tetto un salto.

XXIV.

" These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch;
For late there have appear'd three giants rough;
What nation or what kingdom bore the batch
I know not, but they are all of savage stuff;
When force and malice with some genius match,
You know, they can do all—*we* are not enough:
And these so much our orisons derange,
I know not what to do, till matters change.

XXV.

" Our ancient fathers living the desert in,
For just and holy works were duly fed;
Think not they lived on locusts sole, 'tis certain
That manna was rain'd down from heaven instead;
But here 'tis fit we keep on the alert in
Our bounds, or taste the stones shower'd down for bread,
From off yon mountain daily raining faster,
And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

XXVI.

" The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far; he
Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,
And flings them, our community to bury;
And all that I can do but more provokes."
While thus they parley in the cemetery,
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,
Which nearly crush'd Rondell, came tumbling over,
So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII.

Tirati drento, cavalier, per Dio,
Disse l'abate, che la manna casca.
Risponde Orlando: caro abate mio,
Costui non vuol che'l mio caval più pasca:
Veggo che lo guarrebbe del restìo:
Quel sasso par che di buon braccio nasca.
Rispose il santo padre: io non t'inganno,
Credo che'l monte un giorno gitteranno.

XXVIII.

Orlando governar fece Rondello,
E ordinar per se da colazione:
Poi disse: abate, io voglio andare a quello
Che dette al mio caval con quel cantone.
Disse l'abate: come car fratello
Consiglierotti sanza passione?
Io ti sconforto, baron, di tal gita;
Ch'io so che tu vi lascerai la vita.

XXIX.

Quel Passamonte porta in man tre dardi:
Chi frombe, chi baston, chi mazzafrusti;
Sai che giganti più di noi gagliardi
Son per ragion, che son anco più giusti;
E pur se vuoi andar fa che ti guardi,
Che questi son villan molto e robusti.
Rispose Orlando: io lo vedrò per certo;
Ed avviossi a piè su pel deserto.

XXVII.

" For God-sake, cavalier, come in with speed;
The manna's falling now," the abbot cried.
" This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,
Dear abbot," Roland unto him replied.
" Of restiveness he'd cure him had he need;
That stone seems with good will and aim applied."
The holy father said, " I don't deceive;
They'll one day fling the mountain, I believe."

XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
And also made a breakfast of his own:
" Abbot," he said, " I want to find that fellow
Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone."
Said the abbot, " Let not my advice seem shallow;
As to a brother dear I speak alone;
I would dissuade you, baron, from this strife,
As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX.

" That Passamont has in his hand three darts—
Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must;
You know that giants have much stouter hearts
Than us, with reason, in proportion just:
If go you will, guard well against their arts,
For these are very barbarous and robust."
Orlando answer'd, " This I'll see, be sure,
And walk the wild on foot to be secure."

XXX.

Disse l'abate col segnarlo in fronte:
Va, che da Dio e me sia benedetto.
Orlando, poi che salito ebbe il monte.
Si dirizzò, come l'abate detto
Gli avea, dove sta quel Passamonte;
Il quale Orlando veggendo soletto,
Molto lo squadra di drieto e davante;
Poi domandò, se star volea per fante.

XXXI.

E' prometteva di farlo godere.
Orlando disse: pazzo saracino,
Io vengo a te, com'è di Dio volere,
Per darti morte, e non per ragazzino;
A'monaci suoi fatto hai dispiacere;
Non può più comportarti can mastino.
Questo gigante armar si corse a furia,
Quando sentì ch'e'gli diceva ingiuria,

XXXII.

E ritornato ove aspettava Orlando,
Il qual non s'era partito da bomba;
Subito venne la corda girando,
E lascia un sasso andar fuor de la fromba,
Che in su la testa giugnea rotolando
Al conte Orlando, e l'elmetto rimbomba;
E'cadde per la pena tramortito;
Ma più che morto par, tanto è stordito.

XXX.

The abbot sign'd the great cross on his front,
" Then go you with God's benison and mine:"
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
As the abbot had directed, kept the line
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;
Who, seeing him alone in this design,
Survey'd him fore and aft with eyes observant,
Then ask'd him, " If he wish'd to stay as servant?"

XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.
But, said Orlando, " Saracen insane!
I come to kill you, if it shall so please
God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—
Vile dog! 'tis past his patience to sustain."
The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,
When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII.

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging
The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength so rude,
As show'd a sample of his skill in slinging;
It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing,
So that he swooned with pain as if he died,
But more than dead, he seem'd so stupified.

XXXIII.

Passamonte pensò che fusse morto,
E disse: io voglio andarmi a disarmare:
Questo poltron per chi m'aveva scorto?
Ma Cristo i suoi non suole abbandonare,
Massime Orlando, ch'egli arebbe il torto.
Mentre il gigantè l'arme va a spogliare,
Orlando in questo tempo si risente,
E rivocava e la forza e la mente.

XXXIV.

E gridò forte: gigante, ove vai?
Ben ti pensasti d'avermi ammazzato!
Volgiti a drieto, che, s'ale non hai,
Non puoi da me fuggir, can rinnegato:
A tradimentò ingiuriato m'hai.
Donde il gigante allor maravigliato
Si volse a drieto, e riteneva il passo;
Poi si chinò per tor di terra un sasso.

XXXV.

Orlando avea Cortana ignuda in mano;
Trasse a la testa: e Cortana tagliava:
Per mezzo il teschio partì del pagano,
E Passamonte morto rovinava:
E nel cadere il superbo e villano
Divotamente Macon bestemmiava;
Ma mentre che bestemmia il crudo e acerbo,
Orlando ringraziava il Padre e'l Verbo.

XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,
Said, " I will go, and while he lies along,
Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?"
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,
Especially Orlando, such a knight,
As to desert would almost be a wrong.
While the giant goes to put off his defences,
Orlando has recall'd his force and senses:

XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, " Giant, where dost go?
Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;
To the right about—without wings thou'rt too slow
To fly my vengeance—currish renegade!
'Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."
The giant his astonishment betray'd,
And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,
And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand;
To split the head in twain was what he schemed:—
Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
And pagan Passamont died unredeem'd,
Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,
And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;
But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,
Orlando thank'd the Father and the Word,—

XXXVI.

Dicendo: quanta grazia oggi m'ha 'data!
Sempre ti sono, o signor mio, tenuto;
Per te conosco la vita salvata;
Però che dal gigante era abbattuto:
Ogni cosa a ragion fai misurata;
Non val nostro poter sanza il tuo ajuto.
Priegoti, sopra me tenga la mano,
Tanto che ancor ritorni a Carlo Mano.

XXXVII.

Poi ch'ebbe questo detto sen' andòe,
Tanto che trouva Alabastro più basso
Che si sforzava, quando e'lo trovòe,
Di sveglier d'una ripa fuori un masso.
Orlando, com'e' giunse a quel, gridòe:
Che pensi tu, ghiotton, gittar quel sasso?
Quando Alabastro questo grido intende,
Subitamente la sua fromba prende.

XXXVIII.

E'trasse d'una pietra molto grossa,
Tanto ch'Orlando bisognò schermisse;
Che se l'avesse giunto la percossa,
Non bisognava il medico venisse.
Orlando adoperò poi la sua possa;
Nel pettignon tutta la spada misse:
E morto cadde questo babalone,
E non dimenticò però Macone.

XXXVI.

Saying, "What grace to me thou'st this day given!
And I to thee, oh Lord! am ever bound.
I know my life was saved by thee from heaven,
Since by the giant I was fairly down'd.
All things by thee are measured just and even;
Our power without thine aid would nought be found:
I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
At least return once more to Carloman."

XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;
And Alabaster he found out below,
Doing the very best that in him lay
To root from out a bank a rock or two.
Orlando, when he reach'd him, loud 'gan say,
"How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw?"
When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII.

And hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,
That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,
And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,
There would have been no need of a physician.
Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
And in his bulky bosom made incision
With all his sword. The lout fell; but o'erthrown, he
However by no means forgot Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante aveva al suo modo un palagio
Fatto di frasche e di schegge e di terra:
Quivi, secondo lui, si posa ad agio;
Quivi la notte si rinchiude e serra.
Orlando picchia, e daragli disagio,
Perchè il gigante dal sonno si sferra;
Vennegli aprir come una cosa matta;
Ch'un' aspra visione aveva fatta.

XL.

E'gli parea ch'un feroce serpente
L'avea assalito, e chiamar Macometto;
Ma Macometto non valea niente:
Ond'e' chiamava Gesù benedetto;
È liberato l'avea finalmente.
Venne alla porta, ed ebbe così detto;
Chi buzza qua? pur sempre borbottando.
Tu 'l saprai tosto, gli rispose Orlando.

XLI.

Vengo per farti, come a'tuo' fratelli,
Far de'peccati tuoi la penitènzia,
Da' monaci mandato, cattivelli,
Come stato è divina providenzia;
Pel mal ch'avete fatto a torto a quelli,
E dato in ciel così questa sentenzia;
Sappi, che freddo già più ch'un pilastro
Lasciato ho Passamonte e'l tuo Alabastro,

XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,
And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,
And shut himself at night within his birth.
Orlando knock'd, and knock'd again, to goad
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,
The door to open, like a crazy thing,
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd him;
And Mahomet he call'd; but Mahomet
Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd him;
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
At liberty from all the fears which rack'd him;
And to the gate he came with great regret—
"Who knocks here?" grumbling all the while, said he.
"That," said Orlando, "you will quickly see.

XLI.

"I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,
Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;
For Providence divine, in you and others,
Condemns the evil done my new acquaintance.
'Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay another's;
From heaven itself is issued out this sentence.
Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
I left your Passamont and Alabaster."

XLII.

Disse Morgante: o gentil cavaliere,
Per lo tuo Dio non mi dir villania:
Di grazia il nome tuo vorrei sapere;
Se se' Cristian, deh dillo in cortesia.
Rispose Orlando: di cotal mastiere
Contenterotti per la fede mia:
Adoro Cristo, ch'è Signor verace;
E puoi tu adorarlo, se ti piace.

XLIII.

Rispose il saracin con umil voce:
Io ho fatto una strana visione,
Che m'assaliva un serpente feroce:
Non mi valeva per chiamar Macone;
Onde al tuo Dio che fu confitto in croce
Rivolsi presto la mia intenzione:
E' mi soccorse, e fui libero e sano,
E son disposto al tutto esser Cristiano.

XLIV.

Rispose Orlando: baron giusto e pio,
Se questo buon voler terrai nel core,
L'anima tua arà quel vero Dio
Che ci può sol gradir d'eterno onore:
E s'tu vorrai, sarai compagno mio,
E amerotti con perfetto amore:
Gl'idoli vostri son bugiardi e vani:
Il vero Dio è lo Dio de' Cristiani.

XLII.

Morgante said, " Oh gentle cavalier!
Now by thy God say me no villany;
The favour of your name I fain would hear,
And if a Christian, speak for courtesy."
Replied Orlando, " So much to your ear
I by my faith disclose contentedly;
Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
And, if you please, by you may be adored."

XLIII.

The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
" I have had an extraordinary vision;
A savage serpent fell on me alone,
And Macon would not pity my condition;
Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition;
His timely succour set me safe and free,
And I a Christian am disposed to be."

XLIV.

Orlando answer'd, " Baron just and pious,
If this good wish your heart can really move
To the true God, who will not then deny us
Eternal honour, you will go above,
And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
And I will love you with a perfect love.
Your idols are vain liars, full of fraud:
The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV.

Venne questo Signor sanza peccato
Ne la sua madre vergine pulzella:
Se conoscessi quel Signor beato,
Sanza'l qual non risplende sole o stella,
Aresti gia Macon tuo rinnegato,
E la sua fede iniqua ingiusta e fella:
Battezzati al mio Dio di buon talento.
Morgante gli risposo: io son contento.

XLVI.

E corse Orlando subito abbracciare:
Orlando gran carezze gli facea,
E disse: a' la badía ti vo' menare.
Morgante, andianci presto, respondea:
Co'monaci la pace ci vuol fare.
De la qual cosa Orlando in se godea,
Dicendo; fratel mio divoto e buono,
Io vò che chiegga a l'abate perdono.

XLVII.

Da poi che Dio ralluminato t'ha,
Ed acettato per la sua umiltade;
Vuolsi che tu ancor usi umiltà.
Disse Morgante: per la tua bontade,
Poi che il tuo Dio mio sempre omai sarà,
Dimmio del nome tuo la veritade,
Poi di me dispor puoi al tuo comando;
Ond'e' gli disse, com 'egli era Orlando.

XLV.

" The Lord descended to the virgin breast
Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,
Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,
Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
Your renegado god, and worship mine,—
Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent."
To which Morgante answer'd, " I'm content."

XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
And made much of his convert, as he cried,
" To the abbey I will gladly marshal you."
To whom Morgante, " Let us go," replied;
" I to the friars have for peace to sue."
Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,
Saying, " My brother, so devout and good,
Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

XLVII.

" Since God has granted your illumination,
Accepting you in mercy for his own,
Humility should be your first oblation."
Morgante said, " For goodness' sake, make known—
Since that your God is to be mine—your station,
And let your name in verity be shown;
Then will I every thing at your command do."
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

XLVIII.

Disse il gigante: Gesù benedetto
Per mille volte ringraziato sia;
Sentito t'ho nomar, baron perfetto,
Per tutti i tempi de la vita mia:
E, com'io dissi, sempremai suggetto
Esser ti vo' per la tua gagliardia.
Insieme molte cose ragionaro,
E 'n verso la badía poi s'inviaro.

XLIX.

E per la via da que' giganti morti
Orlando con Morgante sì ragiona:
De la lor morte vo' che ti conforti;
E poi che piace a Dio, a me perdona;
A' monaci avean fatto mille torti;
E la nostra scrittura aperto suona.
Il ben remunerato, e'l mal punito;
E mai non ha questo Signor fallito,

L.

Però ch'egli ama la giustizia tanto,
Che vuol, che sempre il suo giudicio morda
Ognun ch'abbi peccato tanto o quanto;
E così il ben ristorar si ricorda:
E non saria senza giustizia santo:
Adunque al suo voler presto t'accorda:
Che debbe ognun voler quel che vuol questo,
Ed accordarsi volentieri e presto.

XLVIII.

" Then," quoth the giant, " blessed be Jesu
A thousand times with gratitude and praise!
Oft, perfect baron! have I heard of you
Through all the different periods of my days:
And, as I said, to be your vassal too
I wish, for your great gallantry always."
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX.

And by the way about the giants dead
Orlando with Morgante reason'd: " Be,
For their decease, I pray you, comforted;
And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me,
A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred,
And our true Scripture soundeth openly,
Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,
Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

L.

" Because his love of justice unto all
Is such, he wills his judgment should devour
All who have sin, however great or small;
But good he well remembers to restore.
Nor without justice holy could we call
Him, whom I now require you to adore.
All men must make his will their wishes sway,
And quickly and spontaneously obey.

LI.

E sonsi i nostri dottori accordati,
Pigliando tutti una conclusione,
Che que' che son nel ciel glorificati,
S'avessin nel pensier compassione
De' miseri parenti, che dannati
Son ne lo inferno in gran confusione,
La lor felicità nulla sarebbe;
E vedi che qui ingiusto Iddio parrebbe.

LII.

Ma egli anno posto in Gesù ferma spene;
E tanto pare a lor, quanto a lui pare;
Afferman ciò ch'e'fa, che facci bene,
E che non possi in nessun modo errare:
Se padre o madre è nell' eterne pene,
Di questo non si posson conturbare:
Che quel che piace a Dio, sol piace a loro:
Questo s'osserva ne l'eterno coro.

LIII.

Al savio suol bastar poche parole,
Disse Morgante; tu il potrai vedere,
De' miei fratelli, Orlando, se mi duole,
E s' io m'accorderò di Dio al volere,
Come tu di' che in ciel servar si suole:
Morti co' morti; or pensiam di godere;
Io vo tagliar le mani a tutti quanti,
E porterolle a que' monaci santi,

LI.

" And here our doctors are of one accord,
Coming on this point to the same conclusion,—
That in their thoughts who praise in heaven the Lord
If pity e'er was guilty of intrusion
For their unfortunate relations stored
In hell below, and damn'd in great confusion,—
Their happiness would be reduced to nought,
And thus unjust the Almighty's self be thought.

LII.

" But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all
Which seems to him, to them too must appear
Well done; nor could it otherwise befall:
He never can in any purpose err.
If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
They don't disturb themselves for him or her;
What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—
Such is the observance of the eternal choir."

LIII.

" A word unto the wise," Morgante said,
" Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
How much I grieve about my brethren dead;
And if the will of God seem good to me,
Just, as you tell me, 'tis in heaven obey'd—
Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be!
I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,
And carry them unto the holy monks.

LIV.

Acciò ch'ognun sia più sicuro e certo,
Com' e' son morti, e non abbin paura
Andar soletti per questo deserto;
E perchè veggan la mia mente pura
A quel Signor che m'ha il suo regno aperto.
E tratto fuor di tenebre sì oscura.
E poi tagliò le mani a' due fratelli,
E lasciagli a le fiere ed agli uccelli.

LV.

A la badía insieme se ne vanno,
Ove l'abate assai dubbioso aspetta:
I monaci che'l fatto ancor non sanno,
Correvano a l'abate tuttl in fretta,
Dicendo paurosi e pien' d'affanno:
Volete voi costui drento si metta?
Quando l'abate vedeva il gigante,
Si turbò tutto nel primo sembiante.

LVI.

Orlando che turbato così il vede,
Gli disse presto: abate, datti pace,
Qesto è Cristiano, e in Cristo nostro crede,
E rinnegato ha il suo Macon fallace.
Morgante i moncherin mostrò per fede,
Come i giganti ciascun morto giace;
Donde l'abate ringraziavia Iddio,
Dicendo; or m' hai contento, Signor mio.

LIV.

" So that all persons may be sure and certain
That they are dead, and have no further fear
To wander solitary this desert in,
And that they may perceive my spirit clear
By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain
Of darkness, making his bright realm appear."
He cut his brethren's hands off at these words.
And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,
Where waited them the abbot in great doubt.
The monks who knew not yet the fact, ran thither
To their superior, all in breathless rout,
Saying with tremor, " Please to tell us whether
You wish to have this person in or out?"
The abbot, looking through upon the giant,
Too greatly fear'd, at first, to be compliant.

LVI.

Orlando seeing him thus agitated,
Said quickly, " Abbot, be thou of good cheer;
He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,
And hath renounced his Macon false;" which here
Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God adored,
Saying, " Thou hast contented me, oh Lord!"

LVII.

E risguardava, e squadrava Morgante,
La sua grandezza e una volta e due,
E poi gli disse: O famoso gigante,
Sappi ch'io non mi maraviglio piùe,
Che tu svegliessi e gittassi le piante,
Quand'io riguardo or le fattezze tue:
Tu sarai or perfetto e vero amico
A Cristo, quanto tu gli eri nimico.

LVIII.

Un nostro apostol, Saul già chiamato,
Perseguì molto la fede di Cristo:
Un giorno poi da lo spirto infiammato,
Perchè pur mi persegui? disse Cristo:
E' si ravvide allor del suo peccato
Andò poi predicando sempre Cristo;
E fatto è or de la fede una tromba,
La qual per tutto risuona e rimbomba.

LIX.

Cosi farai tu ancor, Morgante mio:
E chi s'emenda, è scritto nel Vangelo,
Che maggior festa fa d'un solo Iddio,
Che di novantanove altri su in cielo:
Io ti conforto ch'ogni tuo disio
Rivolga a quel Signor con giusto zelo,
Che tu sarai felice in sempiterno,
Ch'eri perduto, e dannato all' inferno.

LVII.

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his size;
And then he said, " Oh giant celebrated!
Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
How you could tear and fling the trees you late did,
When I behold your form with my own eyes.
You now a true and perfect friend will show
Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII.

" And one of our apostles, Saul once named,
Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
Till, one day, by the Spirit being inflamed,
'Why dost thou persecute me thus?' said Christ;
And then from his offence he was reclaim'd,
And went for ever after preaching Christ,
And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding
O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

LIX.

" So, my Morgante, you may do likewise;
He who repents—thus writes the Evangelist—
Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.
You may be sure, should each desire arise
With just zeal for the Lord, that you'll exist
Among the happy saints for evermore;
But you were lost and damn'd to hell before!'

LX.

E grande onore a Morgante faceva
L'abate, e molti dì si son posti:
Un giorno, come ad Orlando piaceva,
A spasso in quà e in là si sono andati:
L'abate in una camera sua aveva
Molte armadure e certi archi appiccati:
Morgante gliene piacque un che ne vede;
Onde e' sel cinse bench' oprar nol crede.

LXI.

Avea quel luogo d'acqua carestia:
Orlando disse come buon fratello:
Morgante, vo' che di piacer ti sia
Andar per l'acqua; ond' e' rispose a quello:
Comanda ciò che vuoi che fatto sia;
E posesi in ispalla un gran tinello,
Ed avviossi là verso una fonte
Dove solea ber sempre appiè del monte.

LXII.

Giunto a la fonte, sente un gran fracasso
Di subito venir per la foresta:
Una saetta cavò del turcasso,
Posela a l'arco, ed alzava la testa;
Ecco apparire un gran gregge al passo
Di porci, e vanno con molta tempesta;
E arrivorno alla fontana appunto
Donde il gigante è da lor sopraggiunto.

LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both stray'd,
And saunter'd here and there, where'er they chose,
The abbot show'd a chamber, where array'd
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows;
And one of these Morgante for a whim
Girt on, though useless, he believed, to him.

LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
"Morgante, I could wish you in this case
To go for water." "You shall be obey'd
In all commands," was the reply, "straightways."
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink below the mountain.

LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
Which suddenly along the forest spread;
Whereat from out his quiver he prepares
An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;
And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,
And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,
And to the fountain's brink precisely pours;
So that the giant's join'd by all the boars.

LXIII.

Morgante a la ventura a un saetta;
Appunto ne l'orecchio lo 'ncarnava:
Da l'altro lato passò la verretta;
Onde il cinghial giù morto gambettava;
Un altro, quasi per farne vendetta,
Addosso al gran gigante irato andava;
E perchè e' giunse troppo tosto al varco.
Non fu Morgante a tempo a trar con l'arco.

LXIV.

Vedendosi venuto il porco adosso,
Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone (1)
Per modo che gl'infranse insino a l'osso,
E morto allato a quell'altro lo pone:
Gli altri porci veggendo quel percosso,
Si misson tutti in fuga pel vallone;
Morgante si levò il tinello in collo,
Ch'era pien d'acqua, e non si muove un crollo.

LXV.

Da l'una spalla il tinello avea posto,
Da l'altra i porci, e spacciava il terreno;
E torna a la badìa, ch'è pur discosto,
Ch' una gocciola d'acqua non va in seno.
Orlando che'l vedea tornar sì tosto
Co' porci morti, e con quel vaso pieno;
Maravigliossi che sia tanto forte;
Così l'abate; e spalancan le porte.

(1) "Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone." It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master, Jackson, and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch.

LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
And pass'd unto the other side quite thorough;
So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up near.
Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,
And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,
Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
He gave him such a punch upon the head
As floor'd him so that he no more arose,
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

LXV.

The ton was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t'other, and he brush'd apace
On to the abbey, though by no means near,
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,
Marvell'd to see his strength so very great;
So did the abbot, and set wide the gate.

"*A punch on the head*," or "*a punch* in *the head*," — "un punzone in su la testa," — is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

LXVI.

I monaci veggendo l'acqua fresca
Si rallegrorno, ma più de' cinghiali;
Ch'ogni animal si rallegra de l'esca;
E posano a dormire i breviali:
Ognun s'affanna, e non par che gl'incresca,
Acciò che questa carne nog s'insali,
E che poi secca sapesse di victo:
E la digiune si restorno a drieto.

LXVII.

E ferno a scoppia corpo per un tratto,
E scuffian, che parien de l'acqua usciti;
Tanto che'l cane sen doleva e 'l gatto,
Che gli ossi rimanean troppo puliti.
L'abate, poi che molto onoro ha fatto
A tutti, un dì dopo questi conviti
Dette a Morgante un destrier molto bello,
Che lungo tempo tenuto avea quello.

LXVIII.

Morgante in su 'n un prato il caval mena,
E vuol che corra, e che facci ogni pruova,
E pensa che di ferro abbi la schiena,
O forse non credeva schiacciar l'uova:
Questo caval s'accoscia per la pena,
E scoppia, e 'n su la terra si ritruova.
Dicca Morgante: lieva su, rozzone;
E va pur punzecchiando co lo sprone.

LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork;—
All animals are glad at sight of food:
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

LXVII.

As though they wish'd to burst at once, they ate;
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
Perceiving that they all were pick'd too clean.
The abbot, who to all did honour great,
A few days after this convivial scene,
Gave to Morgante a fine horse, well train'd,
Which he long time had for himself maintain'd.

LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led,
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,
Thinking that he a back of iron had,
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.
Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"
And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX.

Ma finalmente convien ch' egli smonte,
E disse: io son pur leggier come penna,
Ed è scoppiato; che ne di' tu, conte?
Rispose Orlando: un arbore d'antenna
Mi par piuttosto, e la gaggia la fronte:
Lascialo andar, che la fortuna accenna
Che meco appiede ne venga, Morgante.
Ed io così verrò, disse il gigante.

LXX.

Quando serà mestier, tu mi vedrai
Com'io mi proverò ne la battaglia.
Orlando disse: io credo tu farai
Come buon cavalier, se Dio mi vaglia;
Ed anco me dormir non mirerai:
Di questo tuo caval non te ne caglia:
Vorrebbesi portarlo in qualche bosco;
Ma il modo nè la via non ci conosco.

LXXI.

Disse il gigante: io il porterò ben io,
Da poi che portar me non ha voluto,
Per render ben per mal, come fa Dio;
Ma vo' che a porlo addosso mi dia ajuto.
Orlando gli dicea: Morgante mio,
S'al mio consiglio ti sarai attenuto,
Questo caval tu non ve 'l porteresti,
Che ti farà come tu a lui facesti,

LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
And said, " I am as light as any feather,
And he has burst;—to this what say you, count?"
Orlando answer'd, " Like a ship's mast rather
You seem to me, and with the truck for front:—
Let him go; Fortune wills that we together
Should march, but you on foot Morgante still."
To which the giant answer'd, " So I will.

LXX.

" When there shall be occasion, you will see
How I approve my courage in the fight."
Orlando said, " I really think you'll be,
If it should prove God's will, a goodly knight;
Nor will you napping there discover me.
But never mind your horse, though out of sight
'Twere best to carry him into some wood,
If but the means or way I understood."

LXXI.

The giant said, " Then carry him I will,
Since that to carry me he was so slack—
To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
But lend a hand to place him on my back."
Orlando answer'd, " If my counsel still
May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII.

Guarda che non facesse la vendetta.
Come fece già Nesso così morto:
Non so se la sua istoria hai inteso o letta;
E' ti farà scoppiar; datti conforto.
Disse Morgante: ajuta ch'io me 'l metta
Addosso, e poi vedrai s'io ve lo porto:
Io porterei, Orlando mio gentile,
Con le campane la quel campanile.

LXXIII.

Disse l'abate: il campanil v'è bene;
Ma le campane voi l'avete rotte.
Dicea Morgante, e' ne porton le pene
Color che morti son là in quelle grotte;
E levossi il cavallo in su le schiene,
E disse: guarda s'io sento di gotte,
Orlando, nelle gambe, e s' io lo posso;
E fe' duo salti col cavallo addosso.

LXXIV.

Era Morgante come una montagna:
Se facea questo, non è maraviglia
Ma pure Orlando con seco si lagna;
Perchè pur era omai di sua famiglia
Temenza avea non pigliasse magagna.
Un' altra volta costui riconsiglia:
Posalo ancor, nol portare al deserto.
Disse Morgante: il porterò per certo.

LXXII.

" Take care he don't revenge himself, though dead,
As Nessus did of old beyond all cure.
I don't know if the fact you've heard or read;
But he will make you burst, you may be sure."
" But help him on my back," Morgante said,
" And you shall see what weight I can endure.
In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
With all the bells, I'd carry yonder belfry."

LXXIII.

The abbot said, " The steeple may do well,
But, for the bells, you've broken them, I wot."
Morgante answer'd, " Let them pay in hell
The penalty who lie dead in yon grot;"
And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,
He said, " Now look if I the gout have got,
Orlando, in the legs—or if I have force;"—
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this, 'tis no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And fearing that he might be hurt or maim'd,
Once more he bade him lay his burden by:
" Put down, nor bear him further the desert in."
Morgante said, " I'll carry him for certain."

LXXV.

E portollo, e gittollo in luogo strano,
E tornò a la badìa subitamente.
Diceva Orlando: or che più dimoriano?
Morgante, qui non facciam noi niente;
E prese un giorno l'abate per mano,
E disse a quel molto discretamente,
Che vuol partir de la sua reverenzia,
E domandava e perdono e licenzia.

LXXVI.

E de gli onor ricevuti da questi,
Qualche volta potendo, arà buon merito;
E dice: io intendo ristorare e presto
I persi giorni del tempo preterito:
E' son più dì che licenzia arei chiesto,
Benigno padre, se non ch' io mi perito;
Non so mostrarvi quel che drento sento;
Tanto vi veggo del mio star contento.

LXXVII.

Io me ne porto per sempre nel core
L'abate, la badìa, questo deserto;
Tanto v'ho posto in picciol tempo amore:
Rendavi su nel ciel per me buon merto
Quel vero Dio, quello eterno Signore
Che vi serba il suo regno al fine aperto:
Noi aspettiam vostra benedizione,
Raccomandiamci a le vostre orazione.

LXXV.

He did; and stow'd him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then return'd with speed.
Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?
"Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."
The abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said, with great respect, he had agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this decision
He wish'd to have his pardon and permission.

LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim'd:
He said, "I mean, and quickly, to retrieve
The lost days of time past, which may be blamed;
Some days ago I should have ask'd your leave,
Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
And know not how to show my sentiment,
So much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII.

"But in my heart I bear through every clime
The abbot, abbey, and this solitude —
So much I love you in so short a time;
For me, from heaven reward you with all good
The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!
Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood.
Meantime we stand expectant of your blessing,
And recommend us to your prayers with pressing."

LXXVIII.

Quando l'abate il conte Orlando intese,
Rintenerì nel cor per la dolcezza,
Tanto fervor nel petto se gli accese;
E disse: cavalier, se a tua prodezza
Non sono stato benigno e cortese,
Come conviensi a la gran gentillezza;
Che so che ciò ch'i'ho fatto è stato poco,
Incolpa la ignoranzia nostra e il loco.

LXXIX.

Noi ti potremo di messe onorare,
Dì prediche di laude e paternostri,
Piuttosto che da cena o desinare,
O d'altri convenevol che da chiostri:
Tu m'hai di te sì fatto innamorare
Per mille alte eccellenzie che tu mostri;
Ch'io me ne vengo ove tu andrai con teco.
E d'altra parte tu resti quì meco.

LXXX.

Tanto ch'a questo par contraddizione;
Ma so che tu se' savio, e 'ntendi e gusti,
E intendi il mio parlar per discrizione;
De' beneficj tuoi pietosi e giusti
Renda il Signore a te munerazione,
Da cui mandato in queste selve fusti;
Per le virtù del qual liberi siamo,
E grazie a lui e a te noi ne rendiamo.

LXXVIII.

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, " Cavalier," he said, " if I have less
Courteous and kind to your great worth appear'd,
Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,
I know I have done too little in this case;
But blame our ignorance, and this poor place.

LXXIX.

" We can indeed but honour you with masses,
And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters,
Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
In verity much rather than the cloisters);
But such a love for you my heart embraces,
For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,
That whereso'er you go I too shall be,
And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX.

" This may involve a seeming contradiction;
But you I know are sage, and feel, and taste,
And understand my speech with full conviction.
For your just pious deeds may you be graced
With the Lord's great reward and benediction,
By whom you were directed to this waste:
To his high mercy is our freedom due,
For which we render thanks to him and you.

LXXXI.

Tu ci hai salvato l'anlma e la vita:
Tanta perturbazion già que' giganti
Ci detton, che la strada era smarrita
Da ritrovar Gesù con gli altri santi:
Però troppo ci duol la tua partita,
E sconsolati restiam tutti quanti;
Nè ritener possiamti i mesi e gli anni:
Che tu non se' da vestir questi panni,

LXXXII.

Ma da portar la lancia e l'armadura:
E puossi meritar con essa, come
Con questa cappa; e leggi la scrittura:
Questo gigante al ciel drizzò le some
Per tua virtù; va in pace a tua ventura
Chi tu ti sia, ch'io non ricerco il nome;
Ma dirò sempre, s'io son domandato,
Ch' un angiol qui da Dio fussi mandato.

LXXXIII.

Se c'è armadura o cosa che tu voglia,
Vattene in zambra e pigliane tu stessi,
E cuopri a questo gigante le scoglia.
Rispose Orlando: se armadura avessi
Prima che noi uscissim de la soglia.
Che questo mio compagno difendessi:
Questo accetto io, e sarammi piacere.
Disse l'abate: venite a vedere.

LXXXI.

" You saved at once our life and soul: such fear
The giants caused us, that the way was lost
By which we could pursue a fit career
In search of Jesus and the saintly host;
And your departure breeds such sorrow here,
That comfortless we all are to our cost;
But months and years you would not stay in sloth,
Nor are you form'd to wear our sober cloth;

LXXXII.

" But to bear arms, and wield the lance; indeed,
With these as much is done as with this cowl;
In proof of which the Scripture you may read.
This giant up to heaven may bear his soul
By your compassion: now in peace proceed.
Your state and name I seek not to unroll;
But, if I'm ask'd, this answer shall be given,
That here an angel was sent down from heaven.

LXXXIII.

" If you want armour or aught else, go in,
Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,
And cover with it o'er this giant's skin."
Orlando answer'd, " If there should lie loose
Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
Which might be turn'd to my companion's use,
The gift would be acceptable to me."
The abbot said to him, " Come in and see."

LXXXIV.

E in certa cameretta entrati sono,
Che d'armadure vecchie era copiosa;
Dice l'abate: tutte ve le dono,
Morgante va rovistando ogni cosa;
Ma solo un certo sbergo gli fu buono,
Ch'avea tutta la maglia rugginosa:
Maravigliossi che lo cuopra appunto:
Che mai più gnun forse glien' era aggiunto.

LXXXV.

Questo fu d'un gigante smisurata,
Ch'a la badía fu morto per antico
Dal gran Milon d'Angrante, ch' arrivato?
V' era, s'appunto questa istoria dico;
Ed era ne le mura istoriato,
Come e' fu morto questo gran nimico
Che fece a la badía già lunga guerra:
E Milon v'è com 'e' l'abbatte in terra.

LXXXVI.

Veggendo questa istoria il conte Orlando,
Fra suo cor disse: o Dio, che sai sol tutto,
Come venne Milon quì capitando,
Che ha questo gigante quì distrutto
E lesse certe lettre lacrimando,
Che non potè tenir piu il viso asciutto,
Com'io dirò ne la seguente istoria:
Di mal vi guardi il Re de l'alta gloria.

LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall
Was cover'd with old armour like a crust,
The abbot said to them, " I give you all."
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.
They wonder'd how it fitted him exactly,
Which ne'er has suited others so compactly.

LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occurr'd they drew him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said
In his own heart, " Oh God, who in the sky
Know'st all things! how was Milo hither led?
Who caused the giant in this place to die?"
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story.
From evil keep you the high King of glory!

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

" 'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."

CAMPBELL.

[This poem which Lord Byron, in sending it to Mr. Murray, called "the best thing he had ever done, if not *unintelligible*," was written, in the summer of 1819, at

——— "that place
Of old renown, once in the Adrian sea,
Ravenna! — where from Dante's sacred tomb
He had so oft, as many a verse declares,
Drawn inspiration." — ROGERS.

The Prophecy, however, was first published in May, 1821. It is dedicated to the Countess Guiccioli, who thus describes the origin of its composition: — "On my departure from Venice, Lord Byron had promised to come and see me at Ravenna. Dante's tomb, the classical pine wood*, the relics of antiquity which are to be found in that place, afforded a sufficient pretext for me to invite him to come, and for him to accept my invitation. He came in the month of June, 1819, arriving at Ravenna on the day of the festival of the Corpus Domini. Being deprived at this time of his books, his horses, and all that occupied him at Venice, I begged him to gratify me by writing something on the subject of Dante; and, with his usual facility and rapidity, he composed his Prophecy." — E.]

* "Twas in a grove of spreading pines he strayed," &c.
DRYDEN's *Theodore and Honoria.*

DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
  Where I was born, but where I would not die,
  Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
  THOU art the cause; and howsoever I
  Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
  Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obey'd
Are one; but only in the sunny South
  Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth —
  Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

Ravenna, June 21. 1819.

PREFACE.

In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile,—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

"On this hint I spake," and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the Divina Commedia and his death, and shortly before the latter event, fortelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of

whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to Caliph Vathek; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of Childe Harold translated into Italian versi sciolti,—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier," I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the Inferno, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or

imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.(1)

CANTO THE FIRST.

Once more in man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 'twas forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft
Of the immortal vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,

(1) [Dante Alighieri was born in Florence in May, 1265, of an ancient and honourable family. In the early part of his life he gained some credit in a military character, and distinguished himself by his bravery in an action where the Florentines obtained a signal victory over the citizens of Arezzo. He became still more eminent by the acquisition of court honours; and at the age of thirty-five he rose to be one of the chief magistrates of Florence, when that dignity was conferred by the suffrages of the people. From this exaltation the poet himself dated his principal misfortunes. Italy was at that time distracted by the contending factions of the Ghibelines and Guelphs,—among the latter Dante took an active part. In one of the proscriptions he was banished, his possessions confiscated, and he died in exile in 1321. Boccaccio thus describes his person and manners:—"He was of the middle stature, of a mild disposition, and, from the time he arrived at manhood, grave in his manner and deportment. His clothes were plain, and his dress always conformable to his years: his face was long; his nose aquiline; his eyes rather large than otherwise. His complexion was dark, melancholy, and pensive. In his meals he was extremely moderate; in his manners most courteous and civil; and, both in public and private life, he was admirably decorous."—E.]

Where late my ears rung with the damned cries
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;
Midst whom my own bright Beatricē bless'd (1)
My spirit with her light; and to the base
Of the eternal Triad! first, last, best,
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.
Oh Beatricē! whose sweet limbs the sod
So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love,
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My paradise had still been incomplete. (2)
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight
Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of love (3), and bright

(1) The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

(2) "Che sol per le belle opre
Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle
Dentro di lui' *si crede il Paradiso*,
Così se guardi fiso
Pensar ben dèi ch' ogni terren' piacere."

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

(3) [According to Boccaccio, Dante was a lover long before he was a soldier, and his passion for the Beatrice whom he has immortalised com-

Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;
For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain, and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil, they have not yet
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,
To add to the vain-glorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.

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menced while he was in his ninth year, and she in her eighth year. It is said that their first meeting was at a banquet in the house of Folco Portinaro, her father; and certain it is, that the impression then made on the susceptible and constant heart of Dante was not obliterated by her death, which happened after an interval of sixteen years.— CARY.]

I would have had my Florence great and free :(1)
Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over, "but thou wouldst not;" as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.
Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire.
The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer (2)
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave

(1) "L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.
* * * * *
Cader tra' bouni è pur di lode degno."
Sonnet of Dante,
in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

(2) "Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*" Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him. The Latin is worthy of the sentence.—[On the 27th of January, 1302, Dante was mulcted eight thousand lire, and condemned to two years' banishment; and in case the fine was not paid, his goods were to be confiscated. On the eleventh of March, the same year, he was sentenced to a punishment due only to the most desperate of malefactors. The decree, that he and his associates in exile should be burned, if they fell into the hands of their enemies, was first discovered, in 1772, by the Conte Ludovico Savioli. See Tiraboschi, where the sentence is given at length.—E.]

Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume
My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom;
No, — she denied me what was mine — my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers — my tomb.
Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness,
Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolong'd to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet — yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatricē, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius (1) from Minturnæ's marsh

(1) [Proconsul of Africa. — After the expiration of his government, he was prosecuted by the province for extortion and cruelty, convicted on the clearest evidence, fined, and banished from Italy. Yet, reserving the greater part of his former spoils, he lived in a wanton exile; while the Africans returned home with the wretched consolation of having defrayed their own expenses, and seen the money levied on their oppressor carried to the Roman treasury. — E.]

And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph, — let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still, have no repose
But on the pillow of Revenge — Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range
O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks — Great God!
Take these thoughts from me — to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me, — be my shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field —
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence.(1) — I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.

(1) [In one so highly endowed by nature, and so consummate by instruction, we may well sympathise with a resentment which exile and poverty rendered perpetually fresh. But the heart of Dante was naturally *sensible*, and *even tender:* his poetry is full of comparisons from rural life; and the sincerity of his early passion for Beatrice pierces through the veil of allegory that surrounds her. But the memory of his injuries pursued him into the immensity of eternal light; and, in the company of saints and angels, his unforgiving spirit darkens at the name of Florence.—HALLAM.]

Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd
On the lone rock of desolate Despair
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name,
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame

My mind down from its own infinity —
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain —
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown —
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she, (1)
Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry (2) — this to see

(1) This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus*," according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fosse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e uffici della Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotele che, &c. &c. ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai. — E Marco Tullio — e Catone — e Varrone — e Seneca — ebbero moglie," &c. &c. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Sencca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy — Cato gave away his wife — of Varro's we know nothing — and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived several years afterwards. But, says Lionardo, "L'uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città."

(2) [The violence of Gemma's temper proved a source of the bitterest suffering to Dante; and in that passage of the Inferno, where one of the characters says —

And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an Exile—not a slave of me.

'La fiera moglie più ch' altro, mi nuoce,

——'me, my wife,
Of savage temper, more than aught beside,
Hath to this evil brought,'

his own conjugal unhappiness must have recurred forcibly and painfully to his mind. — CARY.]

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE SECOND.

The Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,
That spirit was on them, and is on me,
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;

We can have but one country, and even yet
Thou 'rt mine—my bones shall be within thy breast,
My soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide West;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which express'd
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song;
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan Bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The elements await but for the word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,
Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:
Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?

Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou, whose sky heaven gilds
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew;
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made
Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but portray'd
In feeble colours, when the eye — from the Alp
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm — dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 'twere, for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,
Thou — Thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been, — the German, Frank, and Hun
Are yet to come, — and on the imperial hill
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,

Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey,
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore
Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set;(1)
The chiefless army of the dead, which late
Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye rocks! floods whelm them, and
for ever!
Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?

(1) See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte*.—[The original MS. of the latter work is preserved in the Royal Library at Paris. It is entitled, "Ragguaglio Storico di tutto l'occorso, giorno per giorno, nel Sacco di Roma dell anno MDXXVII, scritto da Jacopo Buonaparte, gentiluomo Samminiatese, che vi si trovò presente." An edit on of it was printed at Cologne in 1756, to which is prefixed a genealogy of the Buonaparte family.]

Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?
Over Cambyses' host the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why,
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not die,
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,
And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car,
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so; but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail,—the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring
Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still Division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.
Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,

So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops,
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes;
What is there wanting then to set thee free,
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed —— Unite.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE THIRD.

From out the mass of never-dying ill, [Sword,
  The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the
  Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
  That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth
  And ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
  Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
  There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,
  The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
  Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
  And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
  Will not in vain arise to where belongs
Omnipotence and mercy evermore:
  Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,
  The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er

The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my country! whom before, as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
And melancholy gift high powers allow
To read the future; and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!
I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.
A spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight;
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
To give thee honour, and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave, (1)

(1) Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.

Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name;(1)
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee—
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The being—and even yet he may be born—
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe
Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader; the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
And raise their notes as natural and high;
Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall sing
Many of love, and some of liberty,
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze,
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of praise!
And language, eloquently false, evince

(1) Columbus, Americus Vespasius, Sebastian Cabot.

The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.
He who once enters in a tyrant's hall (1)
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chain enthral
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone— (2)
The soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—
How servile is the task to please alone!
To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force, or forge fit argument of song! [trebles,
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, (3)
And love shall be his torment; but his grief
Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief

(1) A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.

(2) The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

(3) Petrarch.

Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
Of Freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po two greater still than he;
The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.
The first will make an epoch with his lyre,
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire:
Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of arms, and Christian blood
Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave
The red-cross banners where the first red Cross
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,
And call captivity a kindness, meant
To shield him from insanity or shame,

Such shall be his meet guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him well!
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not love in vain
Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatch'd by time; not Hellas can unroll
Through her olympiads two such names, though one
Of hers be mighty;—and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun? (1)

(1) ["Why is it necessary to adopt the invidious and too common practice of weighing the transcendent talents of Ariosto and Tasso in opposite, and as it were contending, scales? Reader! if you have already had the delight of perusing the last production of Lord Byron's muse, how must you have admired those exquisitely beautiful and affecting portraitures of the two matchless poets which conclude the third canto of the 'Prophecy of Dante!' We there see them contrasted without such invidious comparison, or depreciation of the one to exalt the other; and characterised in numbers, style, and sentiment, so wonderfully *Dantesque*, that—

Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
The electric blood with which their arteries run,
Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be,
For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of Paradise but long to flee
Back to their native mansion, soon they find
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,
And die or are degraded, for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture passions flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear;
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,
Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouch'd who learn'd to bear,
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unbless'd;
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,
Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,

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mastering our uncongenial language, and habitual modes of thought as well as expression — they seem to have been inspired by the very genius of the *inarrivabile* Dante himself." — GLENBERVIE, *Ricciardetto*, p. 106.]

While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning
breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

Many are poets who have never penn'd
  Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
  They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd
  The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
  Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd
Than those who are degraded by the jars
  Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
  Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name,
  For what is poesy but to create
  From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
  And be the new Prometheus of new men,
  Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
  And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
  Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,

Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it: we can bear.—But thus all they
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvass till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy, which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved — Alas!
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give
New wonders to the world; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar

A dome (1), its image, while the base expands
Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair,
And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.
And the bold Architect unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their lord, (2)
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew (3), at whose word

(1) The cupola of St. Peter's.

(2) ["If," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "the high admiration and esteem in which Michael Angelo has been held by all nations, and in all ages, should be put to the account of prejudice, it must still be granted that those prejudices could not have been entertained without a cause: the ground of our prejudice then becomes the source of our admiration. But from whatever it proceeds, or whatever it is called, it will not, I hope, be thought presumptuous in me to appear in the train, I cannot say of his imitators, but of his admirers. I have taken another course, one more suited to my abilities, and to the taste of the times in which I live. Yet, however unequal I feel myself to that attempt, were I now to begin the world again, I would tread in the steps of that great master. To kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man."—Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 216.]

(3) The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

SONETTO

Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,
Siede gigante; e le più illustre, e conte
Opre dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbra sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest' è Mosè; ben me 'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte,
Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea del monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.

Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,
Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd
Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne, (1)
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,

Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a se d' intorno, e tale
Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzaste ?
Alzata aveste imago a questa eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui.

" And who is he that, shaped in sculptured stone,
Sits giant-like ? stern monument of art
Unparallel'd, while language seems to start
From his prompt lips, and we his precepts own ?
— 'Tis Moses ; by his beard's thick honours known,
And the twin beams that from his temples dart ;
'Tis Moses ; seated on the mount apart,
Whilst yet the Godhead o'er his features shone.
Such once he look'd, when ocean's sounding wave
Suspended hung, and such amidst the storm,
When o'er his foes the refluent waters roar'd.
An idol calf his followers did engrave ;
But had they raised this awe-commanding form,
Then had they with less guilt their work adored." — ROGERS.

(1) The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel. — [" It is obvious, throughout Michael Angelo's works, that the poetical mind of Dante influenced his feelings. The demons in the Last Judgment, with all their mixed and various passions, may find a prototype in ' La Divina Commedia.' The figures rising from the grave mark his study of ' L'Inferno e il Purgatorio ;' and the subject of the Brazen Serpent, in the Sistine Chapel, must remind every reader of canto XXV. dell' Inferno, where the flying serpents, the writhings and contortions of the human body from envenomed wounds, are described with pathos and horror ; and the execution of Haman, in the opposite angle of the same ceiling, is doubtless designed from these lines, —

' Poi piovre dentro all' alta fantasia
Un crocifisso dispettoso e fiero
Nella sua vista, e cotal si morìa.
Intorno ed esso era 'l grande Assuero
Ester sua sposa, e 'l giusto Mardocheo,
Che fu al dire ed al far così 'ntero.' "— DUPPA.]

The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me, (1)
The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the empire of eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The genius of my country shall arise,
A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,
Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvass or on stone; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy;
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants who but take her for a toy
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute

(1) I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where,) that Dante was so great a favourite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea. — ["Michael Angelo's copy of Dante," says Duppa, "was a large folio, with Landino's commentary; and upon the broad margin of the leaves he designed, with a pen and ink, all the interesting subjects. This book was possessed by Antonio Montauti, a sculptor and architect of Florence, who, being appointed architect to St. Peter's, removed to Rome, and shipped his effects at Leghorn for Civita Vecchia, among which was this edition of Dante: in the voyage the vessel foundered at sea, and it was unfortunately lost in the wreck."]

Her charms to pontiffs proud,(1) who but employ
The man of genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot.
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,
But free; who sweats for monarchs is no more
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,

(1) See the treatment of Michael Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X. — [Julius II. was no sooner seated on the papal throne than he was surrounded by men of genius, and Michael Angelo was among the first invited to his court. The pope had a personal attachment to him, and conversed with him upon every subject, as well as sculpture, with familiarity and friendship; and, that he might visit him frequently, and with perfect convenience, caused a covered bridge to be made from the Vatican palace to his study, to enable him to pass at all times without being observed. On paying his visit one morning, Michael Angelo was rudely interrupted by the person in waiting, who said, "I have an order not to let you enter." Michael felt with indignation this unmerited disgrace, and, in the warmth of resentment, desired him to tell the Pope, "from that time forward, if his Holiness should want him, he should have to seek him in another place." On his return home, he ordered his servants to sell the furniture in his house to the Jews, and to follow him to Florence. Himself, the same evening, took post, and arrived at Poggibonzi castle, in Tuscany, before he rested. The Pope despatched five couriers with orders to conduct him back: but he was not overtaken until he was in a foreign state. A reconciliation was, however, a few months after, effected at Bologna, through the mediation of the gonfaloniere. As Michael Angelo entered the presence chamber, the Pope gave him an askance look of displeasure, and after a short pause saluted him, "In the stead of your coming to us, you seem to have expected that we should wait upon you." Michael Angelo replied, with submission, that his error arose from too hastily feeling a disgrace that he was unconscious of meriting, and hoped his Holiness would pardon what was past. The Pope thereupon gave him his benediction, and restored him to his friendship. The whole reign of Leo X. was a blank in the life of Michael Angelo. — DUPPA.]

Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine?
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,
Must pass their days in penury or pain,
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?
Or if their destiny be born aloof
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries which every year
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to kings,
And demagogues yield to them but in date
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,
And the worst despot's far less human ape:
Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,

To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners, (1)
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth
Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were hers,
His country's, and might die where he had birth—
Florence! when this lone spirit shall return
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honour with an empty urn
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain (2)—Alas!

(1) [In his "Convito," Dante speaks of his banishment, and the poverty and distress which attended it, in very affecting terms. "Alas!" said he, "had it pleased the Dispenser of the Universe that the occasion of this excuse had never existed; that neither others had committed wrong against me, nor I suffered unjustly; suffered, I say, the punishment of exile and of poverty; since it was the pleasure of the citizens of that fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me forth out of her sweet bosom, in which I had my birth and nourishment, even to the ripeness of my age, and in which, with her good-will, I desire, with all my heart, to rest this wearied spirit of mine, and to terminate the time allotted to me on earth. Wandering over almost every part, to which this our language extends, I have gone about like a mendicant, showing against my will the wound with which fortune has smitten me, and which is often imputed to his ill-deserving on whom it is inflicted. I have, indeed, been a vessel without sail and without steerage, carried about to divers ports, and roads, and shores, by the dry wind that springs out of sad poverty, and have appeared before the eyes of many who, perhaps, from some report that had reached them, had imagined me of a different form; in whose sight not only my person was disparaged, but every action of mine became of less value, as well already performed, as those which yet remained for me to attempt."]

(2) [About the year 1316, the friends of Dante succeeded in obtaining his restoration to his country and his possessions, on condition that he should pay a certain sum of money, and, entering a church, there avow himself guilty, and ask pardon of the republic. The following was his answer, on this occasion, to one of his kinsmen:—"From your letter, which I received with due respect and affection, I observe how much you have at heart my restoration to my country. I am bound to you the more gratefully, that an exile rarely finds a friend. But, after mature consideration, I must, by my answer, disappoint the wishes of some little

"What have I done to thee, my people?" (1) Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of man's common malice, for
All that a citizen could be I was;

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minds; and I confide in the judgment to which your impartiality and prudence will lead you. Your nephew and mine has written to me, what indeed had been mentioned by many other friends, that, by a decree concerning the exiles, I am allowed to return to Florence, provided I pay a certain sum of money, and submit to the humiliation of asking and receiving absolution: wherein, my Father, I see two propositions that are ridiculous and impertinent. I speak of the impertinence of those who mention such conditions to me: for in your letter, dictated by judgment and discretion, there is no such thing. Is such an invitation to return to his country glorious for Dante, after suffering in exile almost fifteen years? Is it thus, then, they would recompense innocence which all the world knows, and the labour and fatigue of unremitting study? Far from the man who is familiar with philosophy, be the senseless baseness of a heart of earth, that could do like a little sciolist, and imitate the infamy of some others, by offering himself up as it were in chains. Far from the man who cries aloud for justice, this compromise, by his money, with his persecutors! No, my Father, this is not the way that shall lead me back to my country. But I shall return with hasty steps, if you or any other can open to me a way that shall not derogate from the fame and honour of Dante; but if by no such way Florence can be entered, then Florence I shall never enter. What! shall I not every where enjoy the sight of the sun and stars? and may I not seek and contemplate, in every corner of the earth under the canopy of heaven, consoling and delightful truth, without first rendering myself inglorious, nay infamous, to the people and republic of Florence? Bread, I hope, will not fail me." Yet he continued to experience

> "How salt the savour is of others' bread,
> How hard the passage to descend and climb
> By others' stairs!'

His countrymen persecuted even his memory: he was excommunicated after death by the Pope. — E.]

(1) "E scrisse più volte non solamente a particolari cittadini del reggimento, ma ancora al popolo, e intra l' altre una Epistola assai lunga che comincia: — '*Populo mi, quid feci tibi?*'"

Vita di Dante scritta da Lionardo Aretino.

Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,
And for this thou hast warr'd with me.—'Tis done:
I may not overleap the eternal bar
Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding with the dark eye of a seer
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear.
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb. (1)

(1) [Dante died at Ravenna in 1321, in the palace of his patron, Guido Novello da Polenta, who testified his sorrow and respect by the sumptuousness of his obsequies, and by giving orders to erect a monument, which he did not live to complete. His countrymen showed, too late, that they knew the value of what they had lost. At the beginning of the next century, they entreated that the mortal remains of their illustrious citizen might be restored to them, and deposited among the tombs of their fathers. But the people of Ravenna were unwilling to part with the sad and honourable memorial of their own hospitality. No better success attended the subsequent negotiations of the Florentines for the same purpose, though renewed under the auspices of Leo X., and conducted through the powerful mediation of Michael Angelo.

Never did any poem rise so suddenly into notice, after the death of its author, as the Divina Commedia. About the year 1350, Giovanni Visconti, Archbishop of Milan, selected six of the most learned men in Italy,—two divines, two philosophers, and two Florentines,—and gave them in charge to contribute their joint endeavours towards the compilation of an ample comment, a copy of which is preserved in the Laurentian library. At Florence, a public lecture was founded for the purpose of explaining a poem, which was at the same time the boast and the disgrace of the city. The decree for this institution was passed in 1373; and in that year Boccaccio was appointed, with a salary of a hundred florins, to deliver lectures in one of the churches on the first of their poets. The example of Florence was speedily followed by Bologna, Pisa, Piacenza, and Venice. It is only within a few years, that the merits of this great and original poet were attended to, and made known in this country. And this seems to be owing to a translation of the very pathetic story of Count Ugolino; to the judicious and spirited summary given of this poem in the 31st section of the History of English Poetry; and to Mr. Hayley's translations of the three cantos of the Inferno. "Dante be

lieved," says Ugo Foscolo, "that, by his sufferings on earth, he atoned for the errors of humanity —

'Ma la bontà divina ha si gran braccia,
Che prende ciò che si rivolge a lei.'

'So wide arms
Hath goodness infinite, that it receives
All who turn to it.' —

And he seems to address Heaven in the attitude of a worshipper, rather than a suppliant. Being convinced 'that Man is then truly happy when he freely exercises all his energies,' he walked though the world with an assured step, 'keeping his vigils' —

'So that, nor night nor slumber with close stealth
Convey'd from him a single step in all
The goings on of time.'

He collected the opinions, the follies, the vicissitudes, the miseries, and the passions that agitate mankind; and left behind him a monument, which, while it humbles us by the representation of our own wretchedness, should make us glory that we partake of the same nature with such a man, and encourage us to make the best use of our fleeting existence." — E.]

OCCASIONAL PIECES.

VERSICLES. (1)

I READ the "Christabel;"
Very well:
I read the "Missionary;"
Pretty—very:
I tried at "Ilderim;"
Ahem!
I read a sheet of "Marg'ret of *Anjou;*" (2)
Can you?
I turn'd a page of Scott's "Waterloo;"
Pooh! pooh!
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white "Rylstone Doe;"
Hillo!
&c. &c. &c.

TO MR. MURRAY. (3)

To hook the reader, you, John Murray,
Have publish'd "Anjou's Margaret,"
Which won't be sold off in a hurry
(At least, it has not been as yet);

(1) ["I have been ill with a slow fever, which at last took to flying, and became as quick as need be. But, at length, after a week of half delirium, burning skin, thirst, hot headach, horrible pulsation, and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and refusing to see my physician, I recovered. It is an epidemic of the place. Here are some versicles, which I made one sleepless night."—*B. Letters.* Venice, March, 1817.]

(2) ["The "Missionary" was written by Mr. Bowles; "Ilderim" by Mr. Gally Knight; and "Margaret of Anjou" by Miss Holford.]

(3) [See Moore's Notices, *antè*, Vol. III. p. 367.]

And then, still further to bewilder 'em,
Without remorse you set up "Ilderim;"
So mind you don't get into debt,
Because as how, if you should fail,
These books would be but baddish bail.

And mind you do *not* let escape
These rhymes to Morning Post or Perry,
Which would be *very* treacherous — *very*,
And get me into such a scrape!
For, firstly, I should have to sally,
All in my little boat, against a *Galley*;
And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight,
Have next to combat with the female knight.

March 25. 1817.

EPISTLE FROM MR. MURRAY TO DR. POLIDORI.(1)

Dear Doctor, I have read your play,
Which is a good one in its way, —
Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels

(1) [For some particulars relating to Dr. Polidori, and his tragedy, see *ante*, Vol. III. p. 275. "I never," says Lord Byron, "was much more disgusted with any human production than with the eternal nonsense, and tracasseries, and emptiness, and ill-humour, and vanity of this young person; but he has some talent, and is a man of honour, and has dispositions of amendment. Therefore use your interest for him, for he is improved and improvable. You want a 'civil and delicate declension' for the medical tragedy? Take it." — *Lord B. to Mr. M.* August 21. 1817.]

With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
Afford hysterical relief
To shatter'd nerves and quicken'd pulses,
Which your catastrophe convulses.

I like your moral and machinery;
Your plot, too, has such scope for scenery;
Your dialogue is apt and smart;
The play's concoction full of art;
Your hero raves, your heroine cries,
All stab, and every body dies.
In short, your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear and see:
And for a piece of publication,
If I decline on this occasion,
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible,
But—and I grieve to speak it—plays
Are drugs—mere drugs, sir—now-a-days.
I had a heavy loss by "Manuel,"—
Too lucky if it prove not annual,—
And Sotheby, with his "Orestes,"
(Which, by the by, the author's best is,)
Has lain so very long on hand
That I despair of all demand.
I've advertised, but see my books,
Or only watch my shopman's looks;—
Still Ivan, Ina, and such lumber,
My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.

There's Byron too, who once did better,
Has sent me, folded in a letter,

A sort of—it's no more a drama
Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama;
So alter'd since last year his pen is,
I think he's lost his wits at Venice.
In short, sir, what with one and t' other,
I dare not venture on another.
I write in haste; excuse each blunder;
The coaches through the street so thunder!
My room's so full—we've Gifford here
Reading MS., with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming Articles.

The Quarterly—Ah, sir, if you
Had but the genius to review!—
A smart critique upon St. Helena,
Or if you only would but tell in a
Short compass what —— but, to resume:
As I was saying, sir, the room—
The room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards
And others, neither bards nor wits:—
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of gent.,
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.

A party dines with me to-day,
All clever men, who make their way;
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
Are all partakers of my pantry.
They're at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël's late dissolution.

Her book, they say, was in advance—
Pray Heaven, she tell the truth of France!
Thus run our time and tongues away.—
But, to return, sir, to your play:
Sorry, sir, but I can not deal,
Unless 'twere acted by O'Neill.
My hands so full, my head so busy,
I'm almost dead, and always dizzy;
And so, with endless truth and hurry,
Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

EPISTLE TO MR. MURRAY. (1)

My dear Mr. Murray,
You're in a damn'd hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto; (2)
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see Mr. Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print off,
No doubt you do right to commend it;
But as yet I have writ off
The devil a bit of
Our "Beppo:"—when copied, I'll send it.

(1) [See *antè*, Vol. IV. p. 76.]
(2) [The fourth Canto of "Childe Harold."—E.]

Then you've * * * *'s Tour, —
No great things, to be sure, —
  You could hardly begin with a less work;
For the pompous rascallion,
Who don't speak Italian
  Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-
    work.

You can make any loss up
With "Spence" and his gossip,
  A work which must surely succeed;
Then Queen Mary's Epistle-craft,
With the new "Fytte" of "Whistlecraft,"
  Must make people purchase and read.

Then you've General Gordon,
Who girded his sword on,
  To serve with a Muscovite master,
And help him to polish
A nation so owlish,
  They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

For the man, "poor and shrewd,"
With whom you'd conclude
  A compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is
Still extant in Venice;
  But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.

Venice, January 8. 1818.

TO MR. MURRAY. (1)

Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged MS. authors come;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green
The last new Quarterly is seen,—
But where is thy new Magazine,
My Murray?

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine—
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons to thy mill bring grist;
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without "the Board of Longitude,"
Although this narrow paper would,
My Murray!

Venice, March 25. 1818.

(1) [See Moore's Notices, *antè*, Vol. IV. p. 96.]

TO THOMAS MOORE.(1)

What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore!

EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM PITT.

With death doom'd to grapple
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who lied in the Chapel
Now lies in the Abbey.

(1) [See Vol. III. p. 319. *ante*.]

SONNET TO GEORGE THE FOURTH,

ON THE REPEAL OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD'S FORFEITURE.

To be the father of the fatherless,
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less, —
This is to be a monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.
Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
Were it not easy, sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by mercy's means? for thus
Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete,
A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

Bologna, August 12. 1819. (1)

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(1) ["So the prince has been repealing Lord Fitzgerald's forfeiture? Ecco un' sonetto? There, you dogs! there's a sonnet for you: you won't have such as that in a hurry from Fitzgerald. You may publish it with my name, an' ye wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good: it was a very noble piece of principality." — *Lord B. to Mr. Murray.*]

EPIGRAM.

FROM THE FRENCH OF RULHIERES.

If, for silver or for gold,
You could melt ten thousand pimples
Into half a dozen dimples,
Then your face we might behold,
Looking, doubtless, much more snugly;
Yet even *then* 'twould be d——d ugly.

ON MY WEDDING-DAY.

Here's a happy new year! but with reason
I beg you'll permit me to say—
Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
But as *few* as you please of the *day*.

EPIGRAM.

In digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
Will. Cobbett has done well:
You visit him on earth again,
He'll visit you in hell.

STANZAS.

When a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.

EPIGRAM.

The world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull.

THE IRISH AVATAR.

I.

Ere the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,
Lo! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long-cherish'd isle which he loved like his—
bride.

II.

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,
The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom could pause
For the few little years, out of centuries won,
Which betray'd not, or crush'd not, or wept not her cause.

III.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
The castle still stands, and the senate's no more,
And the famine which dwelt on her freedomless crags
Is extending its steps to her desolate shore.

IV.

To her desolate shore — where the emigrant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

V.

But he comes! the Messiah of royalty comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves!
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,
With a legion of cooks, and an army of slaves!

VI.

He comes in the promise and bloom of threescore,
To perform in the pageant the sovereign's part—
But long live the shamrock which shadows him o'er!
Could the green in his *hat* be transferr'd to his *heart!*

VII.

Could that long-wither'd spot but be verdant again,
And a new spring of noble affections arise —
Then might freedom forgive thee this dance in thy chain,
And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the skies.

VIII.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God — as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow —
Such servile devotion might shame him away.

IX.

Ay, roar in his train! let thine orators lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride —
Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied.

X.

Ever glorious Grattan! the best of the good!
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!
With all which Demosthenes wanted endued,
And his rival or victor in all he possess'd.

XI.

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequall'd, preceded, the task was begun —
But Grattan sprung up like a god from the tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the *one!*

XII.

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute:
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind;
Even Tyranny listening sate melted or mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorch'd from the glance of his mind.

XIII.

But back to our theme! Back to despots and slaves!
Feasts furnish'd by Famine! rejoicings by Pain!
True freedom but *welcomes*, while slavery still *raves*,
When a week's saturnalia hath loosen'd her chain.

XIV.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide)
Gild over the palace, Lo! Erin, thy lord!
Kiss his foot with thy blessing, his blessings denied!

XV.

Or *if* freedom past hope be extorted at last,
If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be class'd
With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield their prey?

XVI.

Each brute hath its nature, a king's is to *reign*,—
To *reign!* in that word see, ye ages, comprised
The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From Cæsar the dreaded to George the despised!

XVII.

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping! O'Connell, proclaim
His accomplishments! *His!!!* and thy country convince
Half an age's contempt was an error of fame,
And that "Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest *young* prince!"

XVIII.

Will thy yard of blue riband, poor Fingal, recall
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs?
Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with hymns?

XIX.

Ay! "Build him a dwelling!" let each give his mite!
Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen!
Let thy beggars and helots their pittance unite—
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison!

XX.

Spread—spread, for Vitellius, the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuff'd to the gorge!
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The Fourth of the fools and oppressors call'd "George!"

XXI.

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan!
Till they *groan* like thy people, through ages of woe!
Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal's throne,
Like their blood which has flow'd, and which yet has to flow.

XXII.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone—
On his right hand behold a Sejanus appears!
Thine own Castlereagh! let him still be thine own!
A wretch, never named but with curses and jeers!

XXIII.

Till now, when the isle which should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile which crawl'd from her earth,
And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile!

XXIV.

Without one single ray of her genius, without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—
The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt
If *she* ever gave birth to a being so base.

XXV.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hush'd,
Which proclaims that from Erin no reptile can spring—
See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flush'd,
Still warming its folds in the breast of a king!

XXVI.

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! Oh! Erin, how low
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still.

XXVII.

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right,
My vote, as a freeman's, still voted thee free,
This hand, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight,
And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still
for *thee!*

XXVIII.

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my
land, [sons,
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy
And I wept with the world o'er the patriot band
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

XXIX.

For happy are they now reposing afar,—
Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan, all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
And redeem'd, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

XXX.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves!
Their shades cannot start to thy shouts of to-day—
Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves
Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetterless clay.

XXXI.

Till now I had envied thy sons and their shore,
Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties
fled;
There was something so warm and sublime in the core
Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy *dead.*

XXXII.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon power,
'Tis the glory of Grattan, and genius of Moore!

ON THE BIRTH OF JOHN WILLIAM RIZZO HOPPNER.

His father's sense, his mother's grace,
In him, I hope, will always fit so;
With—still to keep him in good case—
The health and appetite of Rizzo.(1)

(1) [On the birth of this 'child, the son of the British vice-consul at Venice, Lord Byron wrote these lines. They are in no other respect remarkable, than that they were thought worthy of being metrically translated into no less than ten different languages; namely, Greek, Latin, Italian (also in the Venetian dialect), German, French, Spanish, Illyrian, Hebrew, Armenian, and Samaritan. The original lines, with the different versions above mentioned, were printed, in a small neat volume, in the seminary of Padua; from which we take the following:—

GREEK.

Φρὴν πυκνὴ Πατρὸς καὶ Μητέρος ἀγλαὸν εἶδος
Ἀρτιτόκου κοσμοῖ νοῦν τε, δέμας τε ξείφους·
Ὀφρα δὲ παντὶ ζίῳ ἦ ὀλβιος, αἶεν ἐραννοῦ
Σχοίη παῖς Ῥίζου καὶ γάνος, ἠδὲ ζίην.

LATIN.

Magnanimos Patris verset sub pectore sensus,
Maternus roseo fulgeat ore decor;
Neu quid felici desit, quo robore Rizzus
Festivo pollet, polleat iste puer.

The Property of
William J. Druecker.

ITALIAN.

Del Padre il senno, e il bel materno aspetto
Splendano ognora in Te, fanciul diletto.
Felice appien! se al tuo corporeo velo
Dona il lieto vigor di Rizzo il cielo.

THE VENETIAN DIALECT.

De graziete el to modelo
Sia la Mama, bel Putelo.
E 'l talento del Papà
In ti cressa co l' età;
E per salsa, o contentin
Roba a Rizzo el so morbin.

GERMAN.

Aus des Kindes Auge ſtrahlet
Seines Vaters hoher Sinn,
Und der Mutter Schönheit malet
Sich in Wange, Mund, und Kinn.
Glücklich Kleiner wirſt du ſeyn,
Kannſt du Rizzo 's frohen Muthes,
Seines feurigen Blutes,
Seiner Stärke dich erfreu 'n.

FRENCH.

Sois en tout fortuné, semillant Jouvenceau,
Porte dans les festins la valeur de Rizzo,
Porte au barreau l'esprit qui fait briller ton père,
Et pour vaincre?... au boudoir sois beau comme ta mère.

SPANISH.

Si á la gracia materna el gusto ayuntas
Y cordura del Padre, o bello Infante,
Serás feliz, y lo serás bastante;
Mas, si felicidad guieres completa,
Sé, como Rizo, alegre, sé un atleta.

ILLYRIAN.

Ako ti sjagnu — Otçieve kriposti
Budesc zadrusciti — majçinu ghisdavost,
Prisladki ditichiu —, srichjansi zadosti.

Ako pak narav — ti budesc sliditi
Rizza privesela —, gnegovu i nasladost,
Srichjnia od tebe — nechiesce viditi.

HEBREW.

חָכְמַת אָכִיךְ לָךְ יִהְיֶה
יוֹפִי אִמֵּךְ לָךְ תּוֹפִיעַ
עִוּוּז לֵב רִיצוֹ לָךְ תַּרְגִּיעַ
גַּם חַיֵּי שָׁלוֹם אַתָּה תִּחְיֶה.

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